THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LXXXXIV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1938 NUMBER 1210

Supreme Court Obeys the Law

The new tendency of the Supreme Court has not been more strongly emphasized than in its decision that Federal District courts cannot by injunction prevent the National Labor Relations Board from fulfilling its administrative function as prescribed by Congress. The Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation and the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company had both sought, by court action, to prevent the Labor Board from holding hearings on charges of unfair labor practices in their plants. The Supreme Court held that the judiciary has no right to interfere with the administration of the law, at least at this stage of the proceedings. After the Board has made its investigation and issued an order, then, according to the law, there is an opportunity for review of its action by the Circuit Court of Appeals. If the order is disobeyed, the Board must apply to the Circuit Court for its enforcement, or a party against whom an order is issued may appeal to have it set aside. This is the point at which the Court may appropriately rule on the legality of the Board's action. The new decision is a rebuke to the judicial sabotage by which reactionary interests are always striving to obstruct the democratic process.

Pre-Fascist Senators

The Senate of the United States has during the past month offered an exhibition of the same kind of partisan and sectional irresponsibility that has in Europe led to disgust with democratic government. Those who keep looking under the bed for dictators ought to look a little harder for the people who leave the doors unlocked for dictators. Among these none are more prominent at present than the Southern Democrats in the Senate who have for more than a month held up urgently needed legislation aimed at revival, in order to prevent the passage of a bill to diminish lynching. But they are no more guilty than the Northern Republicans who, when the pressure to get at the country's business brought the introduction of a resolution to close debate on the lynching bill and bring it to a vote, ganged up almost solidly against the cloture motion. The Southerners are perfectly willing to let the country go to the dogs in order to preserve their constitutional right to torture and murder Negroes without federal interference. And the Northern Republicans are perfectly willing to abet them in this procedure as long as they can put the administration in a hole. Playing politics with such stakes is the game of madmen.

Premier Van Zeeland's Good Intentions

Former Premier Van Zeeland of Belgium, after his European tour, has rendered his long awaited report on measures to safeguard world peace. Mr. Van Zeeland was educated as an economist, and his recommendations are in the approved vein of economic theory. There is nothing in them that has not been heard a hundred times before. Reduction of trade barriers, stabilization of exchanges, modification of "most-favored-nation" clauses to allow regional trade pacts, the open door to trade and investment in colonies and

CONTENTS

The Week 1

Editorials
- Must Wages Be Cut? 4
- Behind the Navy 5

General Articles
- New Jersey—the Tory Test-Tube . . . . . McAlister Coleman 7
- It Did Happen in Brazil . . . Jerome Davis 10
- Five Years of Hitler-Capitalism . . . . . Guenter Reimann 12
- The Freedom of the Press . Franklin P. Adams 15
- Shoot the Works . . . . Heywood Broun 16
- Washington Notes . . . . . T. R. B. 17
- Other People's Money . . John T. Flynn 18
- Time Steals a March . . . Otis Ferguson 19
- The Bandwagon 20

Correspondence 20

Books in Review
- Reviewers on Parade: II . . Malcolm Cowley 23
- The Unfinished War . Robert Morss Lovett 24
- King Korn's Tassels . . . Maury Maverick 25
- Dark and Bloody Ground . . Otis Ferguson 26
- The Sempiternal Babbitt . . Leo Huberman 26
- Land of the Golden Fleece . . Milton Rugoff 27
- New Books: A Reader's List 28

Entered as Second Class matter, November 6, 1914, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other backward regions, international loans for proper purposes to Germany and Italy—these well worn suggestions might work in a world such as the traditional economists envisioned, that is, a world in which people wanted the free play of private enterprise and governed their actions by intelligent self-interest in search of gain. They are largely irrelevant in the real world, where business men and capitalists are ignorant of their own best interests as a class and are always injuring the system under which they live, and where many of the more powerful emotional drives are not economic at all. The Japanese army, moved by devotion to an Emperor-God, and carrying the nation behind it, neither understands nor cares for the principles of capitalist economics. Mussolini wants not prosperity but the glories of conquest and empire. Hitler and his followers are bemused with tribal superiority and the defense of a mythical "race" against foreign demons. Mr. Van Zeeland does not talk their language.

The War in the Far East

There were three important developments in relation to the war in the Far East during the week ending February 1. Serious tension was created between Japan and the United States when a Japanese sentry in Nanking slapped the face of John M. Allison, United States Consul. Japan finally apologized, and the United States accepted the apology. In a military sense, China continued to show a power of resistance that was evidently unexpected and disconcerting to the Japanese. Guerilla tactics, in which the Chinese Communists have become so adept, were used with great success. Japanese lines of communication were harried. There was also heavy fighting, in which the Chinese held their own, along the Tientsin-Pukow Railroad.

On the diplomatic front, the members of the League made a strong effort to bring the United States into concerted action. For various reasons, including the sharp opposition of nearly all the smaller powers, the League does not dare attempt to invoke sanctions against Japan. It did, however, seek an agreement of some of the great powers to aid China. The plan fell through when opposition was indicated both by the United States and France. The belief was widely held that Japan would try to sink ships bringing military supplies to China and that incidents thus created would contain great danger of war.

Behind Franco's Lines

We hear from Spain that the guerilla warfare behind Franco's lines is more extensive than anyone would guess from reading the papers. The news has been censored by both sides—by the Fascists for fear of revealing their troubles and by the Loyalists for fear of betraying their own supporters in the enemy's country. Nevertheless there are scattered reports of trains wrecked and looted (Aragon, Andalusia), of roads mined (Teruel Province), of "organized banditry" (Huelva), of small garrisons wiped out behind the Cordoba front. In the southern mountains there are whole districts held by the *guerrilleros;* they have goatpaths by which they can cross into Loyalist territory to replenish their stock of munitions. These are minor incidents and yet, taken together, they assume a considerable importance. They show that the part of Spain held by the Rebels is not wholly resigned to its fate; they explain why Franco has to use at least forty or fifty thousand troops for garrison duty, instead of sending them to the front where they are badly needed.

Also these incidents cast a new light on his military strategy, which otherwise would be hard to understand. From the military point of view, Teruel is almost worthless to him. It is certainly one of the worst points in eastern Spain from which to launch an offensive toward the Mediterranean. It lies at the end of a narrow sixty-five-mile salient which, unless strongly defended, could be pinched off by the Loyalists at any point. Franco's wisest military course would be to let them keep Teruel, and mass his troops for an offensive down the Ebro Valley. But from a political point of view, Teruel is essential to the Franco myth. By frankly admitting that he was beaten there, he would encourage and swell the ranks of the guerilla fighters in his rear. Dictators have to seem invincible or else they lose their jobs.

The Admiral Disagrees

Sharp differences of opinion evidently exist between President Roosevelt and Admiral William D. Leahy, chief of naval operations. The Admiral, testifying in regard to the proposed $800,000,000 increase in our naval strength, asserted that the new navy would be for defensive purposes only and that there is no thought of quarantining aggressors. That President Roosevelt has far different aims in mind is apparent to everyone. Admiral Leahy argues that even a navy of 1,800,000 tons, 20 percent larger than now, is not capable of protecting both our coasts simultaneously, or guarding the Philippines, and that we should need three times as many ships to conduct "an aggressive war." At the same time he partially contradicts himself by suggesting that we must be prepared to defend Central and South America from foreign attack. Nobody supposes that England or France is going to invade Latin America, so that clearly Admiral Leahy is talking about attack by one of the fascist powers. Japan is out, because she is too far away. But Germany and Italy have already invaded Latin America, not with guns but with ideas. Brazil, for example, is much nearer to the fascist model than to the democratic one, today.

Does Admiral Leahy suggest that at some predetermined point when Brazilian fascism becomes suffi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ciently acute, we should ourselves send battleships down? If so, we would be more likely to fight Germany and Brazil together than Germany on Brazil's behalf. The whole supposition is completely unrealistic. What could the fascist powers get from Latin America by force that they are not getting now by peaceful means? If we are to dictate to every American republic what kind of government it shall have, and back up the threat with battleships, what becomes of the policy of the Good Neighbor?

Union v. Stocking Boycott

On page 22 of this issue of The New Republic there appears a letter from the American Federation of Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers opposing the boycott of silk stockings as a reprisal against Japan. The argument is that a large part of what is paid for silk stockings goes to American labor, and that the majority of machines cannot be switched over to the manufacture of lisle or rayon. The conclusion seems to be that the boycott will result in unemployment of members of the union. But the point is far from clear to us. Perhaps women will wear fewer stockings if they switch from silk to lisle. Ordinary cotton hose does wear longer than the average silk stocking, though sheer lisle may not. But does it take any fewer people to operate machines making stockings out of cotton fabric? The change from one kind to the other may be necessarily slow on account of the need to install new machinery. But the boycott itself is far from universal, and will become so slowly, if at all. We can imagine a temporary dislocation while the change is being made, but hardly a serious amount of unemployment. Of course it may be that the plants better equipped to make cotton stockings are not unionized. If so, it would indicate that there is a job ahead for this progressive union in any case.

Good News from Minnesota

Twenty years ago, Dr. William A. Schaper was dismissed from his post as head of the Department of Political Science of the University of Minnesota. (The story was told by Dr. Charles A. Beard in The New Republic of January 19.) Dr. Schaper had opposed American entry into the World War, and personal enemies, masking themselves as "patriots," succeeded in forcing him out. Now the University has made such amends as it could. It has rescinded his dismissal and has given him $5,000 as very partial compensation for the wrong he experienced. As Dr. Beard pointed out, Dr. Schaper needed no gesture of justice from the University. "It is the University of Minnesota that needed justification by works." Its present action—in which, we understand, Governor Benson played an important part—is a blow struck for freedom and integrity at a time when these qualities are at a discount over large areas of the earth. That is why we think the report of what the University of Minnesota has done comes under the heading of very good news.

The NR in a New Suit

The changes in typographical style which discerning readers may observe in this issue of The New Republic obviously do not constitute a revolution. Nor, on the other hand, are they a product of despised gradualism. They were not adopted little by little, but all at once, and we hope that for a long time no more will be necessary. Their purpose is, moreover, clearly defined and well considered. When The New Republic first appeared, its typographical form was universally admired for its simple beauty and clarity. It was designed, not to catch attention by sensational tricks, but to be easy to read. Little by little, over the years, corruptions of the original style crept in. Printers were changed; new departments were introduced; necessity seemed to dictate this or that minor alteration. The net result was something less beautiful and easy to read than the first design. The present aim has been, not to go back to the original style, but to serve the same purpose in terms of modern taste and of The New Republic as it exists today. In producing this result, we wish to acknowledge the expert assistance of Mr. Robert Josephy of New York City.

News Notes of a Week

Eleven lives were lost when the British steamer "Endymion" was torpedoed and sunk off the Spanish coast. The British government, which has consistently though secretly favored the Rebels, was put in an embarrassing position, since the torpedo almost certainly came from an Italian submarine. . . . Sporadic fighting broke out in northern Mexico between government forces and fascist "Gold Shirts." The news was significant because of frequent reports from Mexico in recent weeks that the fascists would attempt a revolution. Rumors have ascribed support for them variously to Germany, Italy, Roman Catholics and American investors in Mexican property. . . . Long continued opposition to the policy of sanctions among the smaller nations in the League came to a head. Geneva reports said that the larger powers agreed to carry the burden themselves if the present wording of Article 16 of the Covenant could be left unchanged. . . . Peru's semi-fascist regime is reported engaged in rigid repression.

At home, President Roosevelt continued his series of conferences with business men. Spokesmen for small business were next on the list. . . . Glenn Frank, now the official Republican orator, denounced the New Deal as "fascistic." . . . The Tennessee Valley Authority moved toward buying out some of the privately owned utility companies in its geographical area. . . . Asserting that 3,000,000 persons have lately become unemployed, John L. Lewis demanded a great increase in the WPA to take care of them.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Must Wages Be Cut?

ECONOMISTS GENERALLY are in substantial agreement with those represented in last week's supplement of The New Republic on the depression, that prices of steel and building materials are too high, as well as prices of construction. Reduction of these prices would help revival in residential building as well as encouraging investment by railroads, utilities and other business concerns. The President, in a recent statement, argued that prices should be reduced, adding that wage rates ought not to be cut at the same time, except possibly in building construction. But President Fairless of the United States Steel Corporation argues that prices cannot be cut without cutting wages. Which point of view is right?

Unfortunately, accurate figures on costs of production are not available to the public, and without these we can only estimate the facts. Some basis for estimate does exist, however. Before the recent increase of wages and reduction of hours in the steel industry, the average earnings of workers in blast furnaces, steel works and rolling mills were 66.4 cents per hour, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. That was in the second quarter of 1936. By the second quarter of 1937, after the changes had gone into effect, the average hourly earnings in these plants were 85.7 cents. This indicates an increase of 29.1 percent in hourly labor costs. In the same period the composite of iron and steel prices, as published in the magazine Steel, increased from $32.94 per ton to $40.09 per ton, or 21.7 percent. Thus prices of the product did not show a rise of as large a percentage as did hourly labor costs.

But that is not the whole story, by any means. Labor costs do not account for a large part of the price of finished steel. In 1935, according to the Census, the iron and steel industry paid out in wages only 22.9 percent of what it received for the products sold. Out of every hundred dollars' worth of steel products, labor received $22.90. An increase of 29.1 percent in labor's hourly pay would raise the wage bill in making the same amount of iron and steel by $6.66, to $29.56. An increase of 21.7 percent in the prices of the iron and steel would raise the sum received for the same amount of product to $121.70. Thus the increase of price brought in more than three times as much, per unit of product, as the increase in labor costs. There was about $15 left to cover increases in the price of materials. Or, putting the matter in another way, steel prices would have had to go up only 6.7 percent to cover the higher labor cost, instead of 21.7 percent, as they did.

What about the prices of materials? The important materials are iron ore, coal, scrap steel and various other minerals and chemicals. They made up, according to the Census of 1935, about 60 percent of the value of the product. Two of the principal materials —coal and iron ore—went up 11 percent and 10 percent respectively, between the middle of 1936 and the middle of 1937. Scrap steel went up 38 percent. Other materials experienced marked increases in prices, but not enough of them is used to have much effect on costs. Since the current depression began, the prices of many materials have fallen again—scrap steel is now only four percent above the second quarter of 1936. This and certain other materials do not require much labor for their production, and the fluctuation in their prices is largely a response to market demand. If we make the generous assumption that steel materials now cost, on the average, 10 percent more than before prices were raised, the increase in their cost would account for $6 in an amount of steel products sold for $100 before the increase in prices.

If these figures indicate anything like the truth, we have an increase of $6.66 in labor and of $6 in materials used to make an amount of steel selling for $100 in 1936, and now priced at $121.70—a rise of $12.66 in costs, to match against an increase of $21.70 in prices. The conclusion of this rough calculation is that the price of steel products could now be reduced almost nine percent without touching wage rates, and still leave the steel industry as large a margin of profit per unit of product as it had in 1936.

Of course there are minor elements of cost not included in this calculation—such things as administrative salaries, insurance, rent, taxes and other overhead expenses. But there has been little necessary change in these costs since 1936.

Such studies, investigating whether prices have been held higher than was necessary to compensate for increased costs of labor and materials, would doubtless point to a similar conclusion in other monopolistic or mass-production industries. Even so, this kind of calculation does not by any means exhaust the possibilities of the subject. It is not even necessary to assume that prices could not be lower, in relation to wages, than they were in 1936, which was taken as the starting point in the above discussion.

In these great industries, profitableness depends far more on how much is made and sold than on the rates of wages paid or the prices charged. Steel, for instance, could not earn a profit while operating at 25 percent of capacity even if it reduced wages far more drastically than anyone thinks possible. Nor could it, at this rate of operation, possibly raise prices enough to make money. But at 80 percent of capacity it would make a handsome profit even with low prices and high wages. This is partly because fixed charges and overhead expenses are an important item in its costs, and remain substantially the same at a low point of production as they do at a high one. It is also because even labor costs vary inversely with the amount of output. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

United States Department of Labor published a study of "Man-Hours of Labor per Unit of Output in Steel Manufacture" in May, 1935, which shows that it takes a lot more labor to manufacture a ton of finished product when the mills are largely idle than when they are busy. At 20 to 25 percent of plant capacity, 46 man-hours are required to make a ton of steel, whereas at 55 to 60 percent of capacity, only 34 man-hours are needed. The low capacity thus requires 35 percent more labor per ton than the higher one. A 35-percent difference in labor costs without any change in wages at all!

This is what Mr. Roosevelt refers to when he says that the great mass-production industries should reduce prices without reducing wages. They could well afford to do so if the price reductions would get us out of the slump and increase their sales. But once the price reductions were made dependent on wage reductions, we should reënter the old descending spiral to which there is no bottom. Everybody would wait to see how low prices and costs would go before starting to buy more than he absolutely needed at the moment. Employment would not increase. And labor, with descending wage rates, would be able to buy less and less, so that the price cuts would not act to enlarge sales, at least in consumers' goods.

In the building trades, which do not constitute a highly mechanized, mass-production industry, all of the same logic does not apply. Buildings cannot be priced much lower without lower costs of materials and labor both. And it would repay the building workers to receive less per hour if, as a result, they could have more and steadier employment, thus making more per month and per year. The difficulty here is that it is unjust to ask them to take less per hour—and they certainly would not do so—unless they did have a fair assurance of more employment. And few employing organizations in the industry are stable enough or well enough managed to be capable of giving such a guarantee.

Of course the country does not need, and does not want, lower prices of everything. What it does need is reduction of those prices that are so far out of line that they obstruct activity. In the mechanized industries, such reduction can be made, for the most part, without cutting wages. In building, they ought to be made without cutting the annual incomes of the workers. The problem is how to assure the employers in the mechanized industries enough larger sales so that they will make the necessary price reductions, and how to assure the building workers enough more employment so that they would be willing to take reduction of hourly rates. Difficulty in giving assurance of this kind, in spite of the knowledge by all competent experts concerning the price policy that ought to be followed, is one of the most serious troubles of an unplanned economy.

Behind the Big Navy

EVENTS have moved rapidly of late in the field of American policy. On top of the regular naval appropriation of about $550,000,000 for the coming year, President Roosevelt has asked another huge sum for expansion in the immediate future. Senator Vinson at once introduced a bill to give practical effect to the President's plans, calling for $800,000,000 to be spent in the course of the next few years. Since the President is asking for a 20-percent over-all increase in our navy, and for substantial sums for the army as well, the total amount will almost certainly exceed a billion. This is on top of the "normal" expenditures for military purposes which, without including anything on account of past wars, now amount to more than a billion a year.

Almost as disturbing to peace lovers as the public actions of the administration are the happenings reported to take place behind closed doors, rumors of which fill the Washington air. We are told on what seems excellent authority of activities of many sorts designed to stir the American people to martial ardor, to "awaken them from their lethargy," in short, to make the idea of war, or at any rate the threat of war, seem attractive. One hears of a high administration official who called in important American labor leaders and demanded that they support the supposed policy of the British trade unionists for collective action against aggressors. We are told of another high official who called upon certain United States Senators to reassure them that war is not really coming, an odd action when he had no reason to suppose that any of them thought it was. There are reports that a strongly anti-isolationist speech has been prepared, to be delivered soon over a national radio network by one of the important officials concerned with foreign policy.

Tales are told of a conference of army, navy and State Department officials, held in New York, the purpose of which was to discuss ways and means of breaking down American pacifism. One hears of efforts in influential quarters to have Mr. Boake Carter, the radio news commentator, deprived of his audience because he is opposed to having the United States go to war. The slap administered by a Japanese sentry to the American consul in Nanking is treated, by officials and by much of the press, as an international incident second only in seriousness to the bombing of the "Panay." Some official ghost writer for the administration actually felt it necessary to issue a denial that any "war drive" was going on, and The New York Times actually printed this statement.

We propose to discuss the President's new foreign policy as coolly and as fairly as we can. We recognize that a case can be made for it, as is pointed out by our Washington correspondent in this issue. We are willing to concede the patriotism and sincerity of our oppo-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nents. We agree at the outset that there are two sides to every question, and that it is possible we are wrong.

Having said so much, we must record our conviction that what the President is trying to do involves a most desperate gamble with the future, and one whose consequences will be grave if he gets his way and then turns out to be wrong. What he proposes is to outbluff the fascist powers. On the one hand, he will extend to the utmost international trade agreements with the so-called democratic powers. On the other, he will create a military power bigger than the fascists can afford to match. He hopes thereby to bring them to terms, restore peace in the world and enshrine democracy triumphant.

This program, it will be seen, rests on several assumptions. The President assumes that the fascist powers, confronted by an increase in our military strength, will be frightened and will retreat from their position. Is there anything in all human history to suggest that this prediction is correct? He assumes, moreover, that the countries that have curtailed and controlled their international trade have done so wantonly, without reason, and that were it not for their perversity, they could turn back to virtual free trade at will. How much truth there is in this, one can see by applying the suggestion to the United States. Try to abolish our own tariff system in the interest of abstract world peace and prosperity, and see how far you get.

These objections, however, are subsidiary to a more important one. The President has undertaken a complete alteration of historic American policy. We have departed from it only once before, during the World War, and most Americans now believe that that departure was an unqualified mistake. To repeat that change is very nearly the most serious decision the American people could make. Yet they are not consulted on the matter at all. As Dr. Charles A. Beard pointed out in last week's New Republic, the subject was not discussed in the national campaign of 1936. No one was elected to the Senate or the House because he favored or opposed this action. No important Washington official has said publicly and candidly what many of them are saying, and doing, privately.

It is this very fact, in our judgment, that dooms to failure the President's effort to outbluff the fascist powers. This country is overwhelmingly in favor of peace. A study by the Institute of Public Opinion showed a majority of about 75 percent in favor of staying at home and minding our own business. This was unquestionably true even before the League of Nations, at the insistence of the smaller powers, virtually scuttled the theory of "sanctions against an aggressor." It was true before reports began to circulate that France and Japan had come to an agreement that no more arms should go to China through French Indo-China, and that the British had made a similar agreement covering Canton. It was true even before the present British government so grossly betrayed the principle of "collective security" in the Italo-Ethiopian affair and in the Japanese conquest of Manchuria.

To be effective, the President's plan to outbluff the fascists must have a united nation behind it. The dictators are not going to be very much alarmed over battleships authorized by one Congress if it seems likely that they will be countermanded by the next. The fascist powers can present a united front by suppressing all dissident elements, but that is impossible in this country and we do not believe the President wants it, however much it may appeal to some of his enthusiastic aides.

What is needed is a chance for the public opinion of the nation to be registered concerning this vital question. At the very least, we are entitled to know all that is in the President's mind; it is the people, after all, who will have to suffer and die if the President's gamble is undertaken and turns out to be wrong. We believe that if national public opinion can be heard, before the propagandists have had a chance to get in enough of their deadly efforts, the whole scheme will be decisively rejected by the people and by their elected representatives in Congress.

If you agree with us, we suggest that you write to the President, the Secretary of State and your representatives in the House and Senate. Tell them that you favor full and free public discussion of this important issue. Tell them you favor a defensive navy, not one that is obviously intended to fight in every part of the world. Express your opposition to an alliance with any other power, or a series of them, whether secret, tacit or open. Protest those aspects of the President's proposal which under the guise of "taking the profit out of war" or "industrial mobilization" would destroy all civil liberties and in particular all the rights of labor, the moment that war was declared.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1938,
IN THE U. S., BY EDITORIAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.,
40 EAST 49TH STREET, NEW YORK

Editors

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG

Assistant Editors

T. R. CARSKADON OTIS FERGUSON ELIZABETH HULING

Contributing Editors

H. N. BRAILSFORD HEYWOOD BROUN JOHN T. FLYNN
WALDO FRANK E. C. LINDEMAN W. P. MANGOLD
JON. MITCHELL LEWIS MUMFORD R. G. TUGWELL

Treasurer: DANIEL MEBANE

E. G. WOOD, *Advertising Manager* BYRON DEXTER, *Circulation Manager*

SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Jersey—the Tory Test-Tube

Once a shipwrecked sailor caught hold of a stateroom door and floated for hours till friendly hands from out of the darkness threw him a rope. And he called across the night, "What country is this?" and hearing voices answer "New Jersey," he took a fresh hold on the stateroom door and called back half-wearedly, "I guess I'll float a little farther."

FULL-WEARIEDLY, Jerseymen read this jibe from Carl Sandburg's "The People, Yes." They have heard the story and a thousand others like it. They know that outsiders eye the eight thousand square Jersey miles onto which are crowded four million bemused inhabitants with a mixture of amazement and apprehension. Jerseymen have long ceased being amazed at the fantastic doings within their "Garden State." They realize that Jersey crime news is the delight of the tabloid editor, that the political and social goings-on border on the incredible. The apprehension of honest laborites and sincere liberals, however, is being shared by more and more residents of the state these tense days. Evidence of uneasiness over the distasteful role assigned New Jersey in the public esteem piles up on the Right and on the Left.

Inspired by ex-Governor Hoffman, whose attachment to the public payroll is matched only by his Democratic ally, the labor-baiting Frank Hague of Jersey City, the Legislature has created a $150,000 bureau of ballyhoo, officially designated as the State Council. The Council sends forth a $15,000-a-year "Ambassador of Good Will" whose job it is to journey from Moose halls, through Lions' dens to chambers of commerce, assuring outsiders that the mean things they are saying about New Jersey ain't so.

At the same time the hard-pressed taxpayers of Jersey City who are already paying $30,000,000 a year to operate their city as compared to the $13,000,000 paid for the running of the next largest city in the United States, are contributing $25,000 for an advertising campaign for Hague's Open Shop Haven, soliciting business with the slogan, "Jersey City Has Everything for Industry."

A stream-lined booklet goes to prospects with assurance that factory owners will pay no state income tax if they will move to Jersey and that no license or franchise tax is required for corporations incorporated outside the state. There is an honor roll of factories already enjoying the beneficence of Hague's administration, factories ranging from the great Colgate soap plant to a number of chemical concerns whose odors make dwellers across the Hudson Jersey-conscious when the wind is right. The clinching argument runs, "The fundamental objective of the city government has been to serve the interests of its citizens as a whole, leaving them free from lawless agitation and alien influences in what is essentially an American industrial city, seeking progress and security for all who live or work within its boundaries."

Obviously the attempt of the Committee for Industrial Organization to organize workers long neglected by the American Federation of Labor is the sort of "lawless agitation" and "alien influence" freedom from which is guaranteed by the city's ballyhooers. When the CIO got to Hudson County, after successful organizing campaigns in other parts of the state, Hague went into action to make good the guarantee to runaway factories from New York and other states where some attention is paid to the enforcement of laws regulating labor conditions. Hague shouted at an applauding audience at a meeting in a church, "I am the law," and the war against the CIO was on.

For their part, the labor and liberal forces of the state are busy with spade-work for a Jersey labor party which as Carl Holderman, state chairman of Labor's Non-Partisan League, says, hopes to "transform New Jersey from an impenetrable briar patch to a genuine 'Garden State.'" Holderman's briar-patch simile was suggested by the Princeton Local Government Survey describing the state's political set-up as a "thorny growth, tangled, tough and almost impenetrable."

A recent survey made by the State Labor Department gives the reason for being of the CIO and at the same time indicates the futility of the organizing efforts of the state's A. F. of L. Edward J. Flynn, supervisor of the Minimum Wage Division of the Labor Department, reports that 292,000 women and minors working in Jersey's factories are receiving less than $17 a week, the minimum suggested by the Labor Department. In small Jersey towns, 34,000 workers get less than $5 weekly. The pay of 45,300 is from $5 to $7.99 per week. Speaking of "deplorable conditions," Mr. Flynn tells of a Morris County factory employing eighty-two women and children who share a weekly payroll of $605, while ten members of the owner's family, some of whom do no work whatever, share a roll of $552. Somewhat plaintively, he asks the business men of Jersey to do something about such conditions.

That is about all Mr. Flynn can do, as the cost of making the survey nearly exhausted the $12,500 appropriated by the Legislature last year for the enforcement of the state's minimum-wage law. The law, by the way, has been on the statute books for some years, but this trivial sum is all the Department has been able to obtain for its enforcement.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Low wages and wretched working conditions have been the lot of the Jersey workers ever since Alexander Hamilton wrote in his stock-jobbing prospectus for the Paterson Society of Useful Manufactures, one of our pioneer corporations, that the employment of "women and children of tender years" would keep down production costs. Today, Hague's war on labor is merely the latest expression of the Hamiltonian philosophy which has dominated the thinking of Jersey's overlords since their forbears first supported the Federalists.

The story of the Public Service Corporation calls for the pen of another Steffens, and the mold was broken when Steffens was born. Here is a corporation which extorts, with an egregious brazenry, $126,000,000 a year from a state whose workers average less than $20 a week. It jams these workers into antiquated buses, levies tribute from those who can still afford electricity in their homes to the tune of approximately 18 percent on the investment in the electric subsidiary, sabotages the use of modern electrical appliances in the middle-class Jersey home in order to continue to profit from obsolete gas gadgets. Like the Pennsy of old, it goes into every community, dominating public officials, beguiling the white-collars, seducing the press with its lavish advertising. Let a small-town editor strike out against the outrageous rates charged his readers by the transportation, gas and electric monopoly, and he is visited by an emissary from the P. S. public-relations department. Presently there appears in the complaining paper a beautifully illustrated advertisement showing two housewives marveling over the cheapness of electricity, and the rate crusade bogs down. New Jersey's self-styled "Overlord," Thomas N. McCarter, head of Public Service, is an Art Young conception of the Complete Capitalist, haunch, paunch and jowl. His control over the economic and political life of the state has rarely been challenged.

Four years ago, however, a handful of harassed consumers, brought together by the indefatigable A. Raymon Travis Jr. into the Utility Users' Protective League, called the exorbitant electric rates to the attention of an indifferent Utility Commission. It was shown that P. S. rates in an ideally situated territory were among the highest in the country. Dr. John Bauer of Montclair, valuation expert for the people, tore apart the $445,000,000 base set by the experts for company. In Dr. Bauer's opinion, $150,000,000 would be a correct valuation. George Slaff, young lawyer for the League, who has recently been prominent in the fight against Hague, roused the rage of The McCarter, when the latter took the stand, by questioning the overlord as to real-estate transactions involving millions. Mr. McCarter roared that he did not keep track of such "details." He said that he had been running the utility business of the state "when Slaff was in his perambulator." Even the Commissioners raised incredulous eyebrows when an expert for Public Service testified that he had included in the rate base, under "going value," the value of the George Washington Bridge, the Holland Tunnel and the birth rate in the Public Service territory.

The upshot of the hearings, prolonged for two weary years at the expense of the volunteer representatives of the consumers, was a reduction of $5,000,000 a year in the electric rates. This was nowhere near what the Utility Users' League demanded, but it did prove that P. S. is not impregnable. Since the cut, the gross take of P. S. has increased speedily, pointing the obvious moral that the lower the rate, the higher the consumption. The Commission has negotiated with P. S. for several smaller reductions, but a man-sized cut is now in order. There is, however, no money in the League's treasury for the resumption of this costly fighting. Nor can the bulk of the consumers, who accepted the reduction happily enough but contributed nothing to the support of the fighters, expect that the same handful of devoted spirits will forever be coming to their rescue.

When the spokesmen for the consumers make protest, dark hints of Muscovite influences issue from the press agents of the corporations. Now it is such "Russians" as Carl Holderman and William Jennings Carney, Regional Director of the CIO, who are invading Jersey's peaceful domain.

Union-baiting manufacturers think uneasily of the bitter strikes that raged in Paterson in 1913 and in Passaic and the surrounding mill towns in 1926. They recall with trepidation the militant revolts of the sweated textile workers, first led by Big Bill Haywood, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and other valiant warriors in the IWW. They remember how eagerly the Passaic workers responded to the winged words of young Albert Weisbord. And they can still hear the thunder of the marching picket lines round the great mills by the tawny Passaic River.

Then they are comforted by recollection of how both strikes were aborted by the brutality of the police and the cowardice of the A. F. of L. officials. It is the earnest hope of these manufacturers that a similar technique of terrorism will stop the CIO. The dependable Jersey courts hurry to the aid of the anti-unionists. The Jersey Constitution, last revised in 1844, separates the chancery courts from the statutory courts. The New Jersey chancellor is appointed by the Governor. If you recall the names of the most recent Jersey Governors, A. Harry Moore, Hague's man, the amazing Harold Hoffman, and now Moore again, you will understand what that means. The Chancellor, who receives a salary of $19,000 a year, appoints ten vice-chancellors at $10,000 a year. Seemingly it is the function of all of them to "hand out sweeping injunctions to open-shop industrialists," as Holderman remarked recently.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is, for example, the recent injunction issued by Vice-Chancellor Charles M. Egan against the strikers of The Bayonne Times. The American Newspaper Guild and its members were enjoined from "promoting, encouraging, directing, participating in, or in any manner whatsoever supporting any strike against the complainant." When the Guild protested, the Vice-Chancellor said that the inclusion of this paragraph in the injunction was "an oversight." But the writ still enjoined the strikers from carrying placards saying that they were on strike. Then along comes Vice-Chancellor Berry to announce in a Newark picketing case that the closed shop is "illegal." And to make the case complete, the same Chancellor decides that a strike is no longer a strike if the places of the strikers are filled by other workers, other workers being of course scabs and strikebreakers.

When, in exceptional instances, a judge can be found with some regard for elementary justice, his decisions are blithely ignored by the political powers that be. In his revised edition of "Let Freedom Ring," Arthur Garfield Hays tells of obtaining an injunction against Hague's cops, who had been throwing striking seamen out of Jersey City. Federal Judge William Clark, sitting in Newark, was shocked to hear Hague's blustering Commissioner of Public Safety testify that the police had the right to throw people out without arresting them. Said the court: "They haven't the right. You don't want to be quoted as saying they have a right to expel them from Jersey City." Said the Commissioner: "Well I wouldn't say expel them: they don't belong there, Your Honor." No union organizer lacking the approval of Hague and his A. F. of L. henchmen "belongs" in Jersey City. Hays got his injunction, but word of it never reached the rank and file of the police. This last November, CIO organizers were seized, searched, roughed up and thrown into the Hudson Tubes by Hague's ubiquitous police. "I am the law," shouts Hague at public meetings. "I decide. Me. Right here," he rasps at a New York legislative committee.

Now in New Jersey, the laboratory of reaction, the nation watches a repetition of the vigilante movements that only yesterday caused bloodshed in the Middle West and on the Pacific Coast. Hague's formula is even more callously conceived than Rand's or Girdler's, but it follows the general pattern. As this is written, a call has gone out to war veterans, members of fraternal and civic white-collar groups, chambers of commerce and other labor-hating outfits to rally to the defense of Hague, described as "courageously" resisting "the invasion" of Jersey City by the "un-American agitators" of the CIO. To its everlasting disgrace, the A. F. of L. has agreed to join in the war-dancing. Cheek by jowl with the open-shop Chamber of Commerce, officers of some twenty A. F. of L. unions connive to keep Jersey City safe for the sweatshops.

There is, however, another and a brighter side of the Jersey shield. The whole state is not Hague-ridden. As has been noted, there is a growing resentment against the hard-boiled tactics of the McCarters and the dictatorial policies of the Hagues. Even in darkest Jersey City, there is a minister, the Reverend George Hollingshead, who was brave enough to open his church for a meeting of the Workers' Defense League at which Hagueism was vigorously denounced by Norman Thomas and other speakers. And incidentally, it is worth noting that many Jersey parsons have a lot more intestinal fortitude than some of their smug parishioners.

Hopes of Jersey liberals are centered on the organizing efforts of the CIO and the development of labor's political activity. It is largely the energy and intelligence shown by the directors of Labor's Non-Partisan League which will determine the success or failure of the drive against the economic and political bosses.

Jersey labor learned in the last gubernatorial campaign the folly of endorsing old-party candidates. Opposed to anti-New Deal Moore, the League turned to his Republican rival, the Reverend Lester Clee, head of an imposing church in Newark and leader of what was hopefully called the "Clean Government Group" in Essex. Clee was supposedly friendly to labor. In a rash moment the League endorsed him only to withdraw its support when the reactionary platform on which the reverend gentleman chose to run was published.

Now the League goes cautiously ahead with the work of grooming men from labor and liberal ranks, who can some day lead in Jersey a replica of New York's American Labor Party. Young, alert garment and textile workers are the dynamics of the movement. Unlike so many older Jersey workers who went through the big strikes, the new men are not affected with defeatism. They are tenacious and confident.

If, however, membership in the League is limited to trade unionists and those for the most part CIO unionists, it can never get far in normally reactionary Jersey. It must reach out for all the progressive groups in the state, for the support of the liberal-minded women in the New Jersey League of Women Voters, and the coöperatives, for the youngsters in the colleges, for those outside as well as inside the labor movement. Alliance with the farmers is particularly important in view of the fact that representation in the State Senate is by counties, not on a population basis, and that a Jersey farm Senator from the waste lands of the interior has as much say about legislation as a representative from densely populated Essex County.

Again, the new party, if there is to be one, must have a platform broader in its scope than most labor pronunciamentos. The amendment of the state Consti-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tution, the stricter regulation or the public ownership of the utilities, the enactment of a state income tax, the defense of civil liberty, the pressing relief problems—all must come within the purview of the platform makers if they hope to win independent voters in the vastly important middle class.

There are moments of despair when one concludes that the middle-class Jerseyman is the most depressing form of human life to tread the American earth since the founding of the Union. So many of him regard the state as merely a place for the hanging of collective commuters' hats on the return from New York offices. Beneath the respectable exteriors of many of the bus riders and the automobile drivers there is the collective social conscience of a man-eating shark. Others are just plumb dumb. The workers are "bums" not fit for self-government. Unions, and even the fast-growing coöperatives, are "Communistic." Seemingly insatiable gluttons for punishment, thousands of commuters stay away from the polls, evidently regarding such strange characters as Hague, Moore, Hoffman and Company as inevitable political phenomena.

Here and there, however, they are discovering that the rich and well born are not such wise rulers as Hamilton cracked them up to be. In the rearguard of the current Recessional, they are getting a bit foot-sore, these "Junior Executives," Wall Street clerks, oil-burner salesmen, air-conditioning "engineers." They do not all now believe that the new business breakdown was plotted by John L. Lewis in consultation with Franklin Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin. Some of them are organizing public forums, some of them are asking about white-collar unions. Some are demanding guest speakers at their clubs who will talk on subjects a bit more controversial than the flora and fauna of northern New Jersey.

There is the opportunity and the ripe time for the CIO and its political arm to come to the white collars, and the farmers as well, with a constructive program for rooting out the Jersey briar patch. Denunciations of Hague in the New York papers annoy the open-shoppers, but add nothing to the pay envelopes or the security of the hired hands. If the labor offensive is to succeed it must be carried on along both economic and political lines. It is on the political front that the statesmanship of the CIO leaders will soon be tested. If they broaden their appeal to capture the imagination of the middle people of the state, they may soon wield the same influence in Jersey as their fellow workers in the American Labor Party wield across the Hudson. There is nothing in the books to indicate that the Hamiltonians can win forever. After all, there was a man named Thomas Jefferson.

MCALISTER COLEMAN

It Did Happen in Brazil

GREAT EFFORTS have lately been made to make the Vargas dictatorship in Brazil smell a little sweeter in American nostrils. Mr. Vargas himself, and spokesmen for him, are insisting that his regime has nothing to do with fascism, and certainly nothing to do with any European variety. Some American publicists have been singing the same song. What are the facts?

On the basis of a visit to Brazil from which I returned a short time ago, it is my judgment that that country has a South American brand of fascism which is in danger of setting the trend in the Southern Hemisphere. Brazil is larger than the United States, excluding Alaska, is fifty-six times the size of England, and covers three-sevenths of the entire area of the continent. A fascist South America in alliance with Germany and Italy might prove a genuine threat to the United States in more ways than one. Already interest payments on Brazilian bonds have been stopped and financial difficulties are growing. Even now Berlin is broadcasting in Portuguese for Brazil nightly.

To understand the present situation, a few background facts are essential. Brazil is an undeveloped country with some forty-eight million inhabitants, including a million and a half Indians, half a million Germans, over a million Italians and a large number of the descendants of African slaves. Virtually no racial discrimination exists. Since the Negroes marry freely with the Portuguese, almost everyone is of mixed blood.

The population may be divided roughly into the 7 percent who compose the propertied and middle classes and the 93 percent who are poverty-stricken and exploited. About 80 percent are engaged in agriculture; most of them living near the starvation level. Huge areas are controlled by landlords and foreign imperialists. Strikes and revolts are numerous. In the wilder areas of the northeastern states outlaw bands are now operating.

Since the monarchy was overthrown in 1889, dictator has followed dictator in establishing *paper* democratic, constitutional forms of government. Getulio Vargas is the latest to seize the power. His life is revealing. He was born April 19, 1882, in Sao Borja, on the frontiers of the Rio Grande do Sul, which separates Argentina from Brazil. His father was a general and a prominent party leader. Vargas attended a private school until he entered the military

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the basis of "revolutionary shop-stewards." However, almost spontaneously, this kind of organization grows again and again. It is impossible to prevent all workers from meeting a few "friends" who work in other factories, especially if these workers are living in big towns. This makes possible the spread of such a movement from below, in spite of the arrest of the central leadership.

Most industrialists are well aware of the attitude and the feelings of their "followers." They regret that there are no trade-union representatives who can influence the workers and with whom they can compromise. Today they can call for the Gestapo if the workers do not obey the "factory leaders." But what will these workers do if there is another war with great suffering and without chance of victory?

Outside Germany, Hitler may appear to be a guarantor of "social peace." But, paradoxically, many German capitalists would welcome an opportunity to invest their money in countries where there are still strikes organized by legal trade unions.

GUENTER REIMANN

The Freedom of the Press

JAMES CARRINGTON was a newspaperman. He began as a reporter on The Appeal. He was a good reporter from the start. The editor-publisher, long before the talk of NRA and minimum wage, paid him $18 a week. By the time—five years—he grew to be the paper's best all-round reporter he was getting $95. The $5 was a raise. He had been getting $90; The Gazette offered him $110; and Mr. Harrison offered him an extra $5 if he'd stay, hinting that there were chances for advancement for staff men.

Carrington worked six years more as reporter, during which time his $95 took care of a wife, acquired after the $5 raise, and two children.

And just as he had forgotten, with a cynicism that journalism breeds, all about Harrison's hint as to advancement, Edgar Maxwell Abbott, the chief editorial writer, aged sixty-nine and with The Appeal for fifty-four years, boy and man, died. They turned rule on the editorial page for his obituary editorial, written by Benjamin Clybourne, his assistant. "For the first time in fifty-four years," it began, "The Appeal goes to press this morning without the assistance of Edgar Maxwell Abbott. This page knew his work for thirty-six years. Few readers of this newspaper, few readers of this page, knew even his name." And so on—though many a reader said that an editorial writer has to die to win even one day's fame.

So Benjamin Clybourne was promoted to be chief editorial writer and Mr. Harrison asked Reporter James Carrington how he'd like to do editorials. He snapped at it. "Of course," said Harrison, "it is better paid work than reporting, and we'll take care of you." And they did. His pay was raised to $120. That was in 1927. In 1930, when cuts were the fashion, except in the unionized composing room, Carrington's pay automatically went to $108. "We can't cut the compositors," Blevitch, the business manager, said. "And we have to save somewhere, so we have to shave editorial expenses." And in 1932 there was another 10-percent cut, and Carrington got $97.20. And in 1936 Carrington, writing at least two, sometimes three editorials a day, and having charge of the page for Monday's paper, was still getting $97.20 every Friday.

One afternoon in November, 1936, Mr. Harrison came to Carrington's cubicle, a thing he rarely did. Every morning there was a short, perfunctory editorial conference; subjects were assigned, partly to avoid duplication, partly to give the political man his subject, the sprightly writer his, and so on. Harrison seldom attended these conferences, so Carrington felt a slight thrill of elation when Harrison entered.

"Jim," said Harrison, "I assume you read the papers."

"Certainly," said Carrington.

"Well, then you have noticed how employment is increasing. There's at least a column a day of items telling that this concern has employed 2,000 more men, and that one 3,000, and so on. And this firm has increased pay 15 percent, and that one 10. Read the financial page?"

"Yes, sir. I read the whole paper, and most of the others."

"Well, then. Look at increased dividends. Resumption of dividends, all that. Now, I want you to write the leader tomorrow. Return of prosperity. Make 1929 look like nothing. Prosperity. Not around the corner. Here. And it is here, Jim. Put stuff into it; sincere, simple stuff. See?"

"I see," said Carrington. "But, Mr. Harrison, I can't write a sincere editorial about Prosperity when I've had two cuts. I got $120 when I started; now I get $97.20. That doesn't look like prosperity to me. I know the paper is making lots of money."

Harrison looked at Carrington as though he doubted his ears.

"Are you telling me you refuse to write an editorial that is true, and in line with the paper's policy of prosperity? I had more faith in your loyalty, Jim."

"I can't furnish all the loyalty," said Carrington. "How about yours to me?"

"Jim," said the editor-publisher, "I'm sorry. You've been here about eighteen years. One of the family. I'm sorry. Jim, you'd probably be happier somewhere else. I'll send an order for two weeks' pay. Goodbye. Don't hesitate to ask me if I can do anything personally."

"You can personally go to hell," said Carrington. He took his hat, and left Harrison sitting in his little room.

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Shoot the Works

Fathers and Sons in Comic Strip

IT IS UNFORTUNATE that Sinclair Lewis has introduced the subject of radicalism into his new novel, "The Prodigal Parents." There seems to be a popular notion that the book is chiefly an expression of the author's attitude toward communism. This part of the story has been discussed in many reviews. And yet on the basis of any careful evaluation this phase is only a minor one in the Lewis scheme.

Even a bad book by Sinclair Lewis cannot be dismissed lightly, because of all American authors he is the greatest literary opportunist. Nor is this said as a reproach. Certainly no newspaperman is in a position to sneer at the artist who has his nose, his ear and his entire carcass to the ground.

With very few exceptions Lewis has been shrewd in catching some murmur of popular discussion and underlining it in literature, or thereabouts. When he wrote of small towns and their place in American culture he hardly invented the subject. It was in the air and he brought it to earth. The same thing holds true of the book in which he discussed the foibles and failures of middle-class opinion. And again in "Arrowsmith," the best of the lot, I think, Lewis had a newspaperman's nose for detecting the fact that there was a nascent interest in the subject of medical research.

It might have been possible for the Nobel Prize winner to have written a successful book just now built around the growing panic with which middle groups face radical ideas. In fact Sinclair Lewis could have followed Benjamin Stolberg and capitalized on the white-collar resentment of CIO success. But "The Prodigal Parents" is not that book. While it is true that there is some surface and passing mention of radical trends, these are used only as devices. In creating the triangle of father, son and daughter, Sinclair Lewis has chosen to make the son a rummy and the daughter a radical. It seems to him that these are equally damning indictments.

But his true bitterness is reserved for youth itself. "The Prodigal Parents" is a book aimed not only at the current younger generation but at all younger generations. It is far more frank than it may seem on the surface. This is the plaint of the man of middle life who realizes that he must pass out of the picture and that his progeny have not been created in his own image. To that extent the book, with all its faults, is likely to command a large audience.

I have spoken of the triangle of father, son and daughter and that is accurate enough, even though a Mrs. Cornplow does appear in the novel. She is an extraneous figure. Sinclair Lewis has written his book around the psychology of the father. I think he is wise to do so. In my opinion he has not gone very deeply into the relationship, but he would be in even more shallow water if he undertook to discuss maternal psychology.

I have every sympathy with his inner feeling. Every male parent must be disturbed at the thought that only God can create in His own image. Heredity is too inexact to be satisfying to those mortals who leave hostages to fortune. Certain parents may take pride, if they want to, in the fact that Junior has the same nose or the same unfortunate ears. But beyond physical resemblances it is generally true that the child in the house is a stranger and that the rift grows wider as the years roll on.

Indeed the clash between father and son in many cases is almost fantastic. There is a basis for the popular belief that ministers' sons are very likely to move out into the world and raise more Cain than usual. Even before Doctor Freud began to chart certain kinds of clash and friction within the family it was known to casual observers that blood is not so thick as water.

A friend of mine named Earl Browder once said to me, "I never talk about Karl Marx at home because I have two small children and I don't want them to grow up to be reactionary Republicans." I wish I had followed his example. I have talked too much incendiary stuff and my closest male relative is, at nineteen, a tired liberal.

Sinclair Lewis expresses the opinion that the present college generation constitutes a "gimme" group asking everything from the head of the house and giving back nothing but contempt and ridicule.

Having lived through a great many generations as both provider and parasite, I hazard the guess that there is little fundamental difference. On the whole I think the present crop of young is more self-sufficient than the yearling group to which I belonged. I put the bee on my father rather more than it has been put on me. But generalizations are dangerous and it is safe to say that within half a century there has been no sweeping change in human nature. The best a parent can do is to resign himself to his lot. There is nothing wrong with modern education or new thought or anything of the kind. Even in a suburban home the observer can see for himself that the small birds howl for worms, eat them and then fly away. Robins do not say, "Thank you, father" after they have had their fill. Young Wiggleworths and Smiths and Carters are much the same.

There is, and always will be, such a thing as parental pang. Many novelists have written about the tragic and fundamental fact that it is easier to talk candidly with a total stranger than with a second cousin. Every man born into the world goes through a poignant and a comic scene. When he is seventeen, or thereabouts, his father sits down and attempts to give him the benefit of his own experience with life and love and the facts of existence. And the older man and the younger man are both hideously embarrassed and no very great good comes of it. Twenty years later the boy grows older and he tries again, hoping that his own wisdom is more special and his own tact greater. But again there is no close meeting of the mind or heart between father and son.

I have said that there is something a little humorous in this, but on the whole I am more keenly conscious of the pathos. Obviously neither party to the parley is at fault. But if the thing is to be dealt with in fiction, as it should be, I think there should be not only wit upon the part of the author but also a certain amount of dignity and compassion. Even if I agreed wholly with those fleeting economic opinions which Sinclair Lewis tosses into "The Prodigal Parents," I would still resent his novel. He has taken a theme that cries out for subtlety and understanding and turned it into a comic strip. HEYWOOD BROUN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Notes

The Naval Program as Pacifism

MR. ROOSEVELT'S great new naval program has curious aspects. The administration, for instance, is making an obvious effort to relate it to the Sino-Japanese war. The impression is being created that the new ships Mr. Roosevelt is asking for are to be built before the next "Panay" incident occurs, so that a vast, all-conquering American fleet can steam across the Pacific and blow up the Japanese islands.

The best commentary on this notion comes from the United States Maritime Commission. The Maritime Commission has a building program for merchant ships of its own, and is keeping a jealous eye on available shipyard facilities. It is not disturbed by Mr. Roosevelt's plans. Many of its officials are former navy officers, and explain sardonically that it takes the navy a year to negotiate a contract for a fighting ship, and usually longer. Even if Congress were to appropriate funds for additional ships at the present session, the keels could hardly be laid before the summer of 1939. The Maritime Commission expects by then to have its first batch of twenty-eight freighters completed, and the ships at sea.

At the Navy Department, spokesmen grudgingly admit the justice of the Maritime Commission's taunts. They further agree that the minimum time for constructing a battleship would be about three years, possibly four. Under the best circumstances, then, Mr. Roosevelt's new battleships would not be ready for war until 1942, and might take until 1943. Cruisers would need perhaps a year less.

Mr. Roosevelt's new program might easily have been presented as a declaration of near-pacifism. There was no factual reason for its cock-on-a-dunghill tone. With complete truthfulness, Mr. Roosevelt might have said that, while foreign nations were known to be exceeding the Washington-London treaty limits, he did not mean to be dragged into this mad, reckless race, and wished merely to preserve our existing naval strength. A considerable part of our fleet, built during the World War, is becoming over age. The battleships "New York," "Arkansas" and "Texas" not only have reached the age limit set by the Washington-London treaties, but are, in fact, too slow and decrepit to fight with the main battle fleet. Befohe 1942, under the Washington-London treaties, this country will be entitled to build no less than thirteen new capital ships. No one in the administration, of course, dreams of building this number. As for cruisers, foreign naval authorities have always looked on the ten light ships of the "Omaha" class as hideous mistakes, obsolescent before they were launched. Their retirement would permit the United States to fulfill the greater part of Mr. Roosevelt's proposed cruiser program strictly within treaty limits.

Why, then, has Mr. Roosevelt's program been announced to the accompaniment of papier-mâché firebrands? The naval building that he proposes is several years away, and all of it could be managed under the Washington-London treaties—which, in their day, were considered pacifist documents. A number of diplomatic observers believe that the program is not intended to be carried out at all, that it is simply a trading counter to be used in the international conference that Mr. Roosevelt earnestly hopes to call. Its chief effect is to establish by law a fleet limit of about 200,000 tons greater than that set in the Washington-London treaties. In a conference, Mr. Roosevelt could magnanimously agree to sink these 200,000 imaginary tons without hampering the navy's established building program.

Preparations are being made in Congress for a great debate on foreign affairs. So far, in the opinion of diplomatic observers, most criticism has been wide of the mark. Mr. Roosevelt's present course is certainly an unabashed reversal of the isolationist line this country has followed, with conspicuous interruptions, since the World War. It is a violation of the spirit of the neutrality laws of 1936-37. But it is not, as some of Mr. Roosevelt's critics have assumed, a witless international adventuring.

The heart of the administration's foreign policy is Mr. Hull's reciprocal-trade-treaty program. Partly for reasons of domestic politics, the administration wishes this program to be regarded solely as a dollars-and-cents affair. But, with the signing of the British treaty, Mr. Hull will have fashioned—at least in theory—an extraordinary weapon against the totalitarian states. This can be easily shown. Suppose one of the totalitarian states, for example Germany, gains predominant political influence over a small, weak neighbor. The tangible objectives that Germany seeks will be raw materials and markets, and the visible sign of Germany's predominance will be an exclusive bartering arrangement. But such an arrangement conflicts directly and immediately with Mr. Hull's program. Germany's neighbor is obliged to choose between the totalitarian and democratic powers. And, once the Anglo-American treaty is completed, if she should choose Germany, she would shut herself off from perhaps two-thirds of the world's trade.

Foreign diplomats here think that the first effects of the Anglo-American treaty will be observable in the Balkan countries that Dr. Schacht, a year or so ago, enticed within the German orbit—Bulgaria, Greece, Jugoslavia. It is believed that they will be ineligible for the tariff reductions established by the treaty, and will find themselves virtually excluded from American and English markets, as well as the markets of some twenty other nations adhering to the Hull system. The pressure to break away from Germany will be immense. An economic break with Germany will necessarily mean a political break, and Germany's push to the East will be temporarily brought to a halt.

The administration's big-navy plan is merely a reinforcement for Mr. Hull's program. With one hand, the two chief democratic powers, the United States and England, create an ever expanding area of relatively free world trade and invite the totalitarian countries to enter it. With the other hand, they heap up armaments, so that the present military efficiency of the totalitarian states, as the months go by, stands at a greater and greater discount. The end of these two processes, in the minds of Mr. Roosevelt and his advisers, is almost certainly an international conference at which a new basis for world peace will be laid.

This policy is not unintelligent, nor brashly reckless. It has even a degree of nobility about it, and does not de-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

serve to be attacked, as some Congressmen have attacked it, with a meat cleaver. Serious criticism here centers on two of the policy's premises. It is asked whether the policy will really work in practice. Brazil is cited as a test case. Germany not long ago sunk her claws into Brazil, and forced her into a bartering arrangement. Last September, Mr. Hull succeeded in persuading Brazil to repudiate this agreement. However, if non-political American business men in Rio de Janeiro are to be trusted, Germany is still receiving clandestine advantages from the Vargas government, and Germany's political influence is unabated.

Observers also point out that the political grip of the Nazis on Germany, the Fascists on Italy and the militarist party on Japan depend in part on their ability to maintain closed economic systems in each country. If business men in Germany could freely export their capital, for example, how long would Hitler last? Can Hitler conceivably make terms with the democratic powers? Or Mussolini? Or the Japanese generals?

Washington T. R. B.

Other People's Money

First Blood for the SEC

You have doubtless been told a hundred times that if the wicked Securities and Exchange Commission would let Wall Street alone, would stop imposing constricting and paralyzing rules on it, things would improve down there.

Now on January 25 the SEC put an end, for all practical purposes, to general short-selling. In view of all you have heard about these cramping regulations of exchange trading by the SEC, I feel reasonably sure that you simply will not believe me when I tell you that, in its existence of three years, *this is the first rule ever imposed on stock-exchange trading by that Commission.*

Through the period of the chairmanships of Joseph P. Kennedy and James Landis not one solitary rule or regulation of any sort was proclaimed by the Commission for the government of the Exchange. Such rules as were made by the Exchange in that time were adopted voluntarily by the Exchange itself. And the Commission never forced anything on this body it did not accept itself.

The Commission is now under a very different chairmanship and its membership is quite different. It has now gotten around, after three years of futility, to dealing with the great problem that confronts it.

It may be recalled that back in 1932 Herbert Hoover denounced the short-sellers in Wall Street. Hoover suffered under the delusion that there was a giant struggle going on between himself and the Depression and that he was whipping the monster in every tussle. By 1932 he had it practically down and out. But a lot of gamblers in Wall Street, by villainous short-selling operations, were nullifying all his wondrous victories over the dragon. It is forgotten, apparently, that it was Hoover and not Roosevelt who provoked the now famous investigation of Wall Street. And he did this to uncover the rascality of the short-sellers, who, he imagined, were a bunch of Democrats like John J. Raskob, Bernard Baruch and others.

At that time literally nothing was known about short-selling. The Stock Exchange had issued innumerable pamphlets, lectures, speeches explaining the great, stabilizing, constructive function of short-selling—all of which was a lot of silly bunk, but it served the Stock Exchange. At the time I tried to point out first that the deepening of the depression was not due to short-selling and that the short-selling was not the work of outsiders but chiefly of Stock Exchange members and professionals. But there was no machinery for getting any definitive facts about this. All the facts were locked up in the possession of the Exchange. It had always refused to divulge them. Under Hoover's prodding it did release a report on short-selling, but as the report merely gave the daily positions on balance of short sales in each stock it was not very much help.

However, out of that report and the facts which the Pecora committee subsequently brought to light in the case of a few stocks, the part played by short-selling as a destructive force in the market and as a weapon of the gambler pure and simple, became fairly plain. When the SEC was set up, I fondly supposed that one of its first acts would be an exhaustive study of this and similar subjects with facilities for study now for the first time available to students. The fact that Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Landis permitted three years to drift by without making such studies has been the chief basis of my criticisms of that Commission. Fortunately those criticisms can no longer be made. For now the Commission has a chairman whose mind is motivated by the natural curiosity of the honest scholar and who begins his regime by an earnest effort to get at the facts.

I still think it true that the short-selling is not responsible for the market decline. But it is certainly responsible for its intensity in certain periods. The facts produced by Chairman Douglas tell their own story.

Take the following five issues—all market leaders: American Telephone and Telegraph, General Motors, New York Central, Standard Oil of New Jersey, U. S. Steel. In the period from September 7 to September 25, owners of shares came into the market and sold 1,609,000 shares of these stocks. In that period the whole market was slumping disastrously. There can be no doubt of the fact that the eagerness of investors and speculators to sell 1,609,000 shares of these stocks was the main cause of that slump. But when, in addition, a small group of speculators rushed into the market at the same time and offered for sale an additional 483,000 shares which they did not own, which formed no part of the actual supply for sale, there can be no doubt that this must have produced a serious depressive effect when added to the legitimate selling supply. As the SEC puts it: "In a distressed market, short-selling increased the total volume of selling by 30 percent."

In one of these weeks—September 7 to 14—the members of the Exchange accounted for 40 percent of the short sales in U. S. Steel and over 44 percent if the short sales of specialists are added—and of course they should be added. And all this was done by a few persons. The SEC studied the accounts of 4,551 persons. Short-selling was found in only fifty-four accounts. And 60 percent of all the short-selling done by these fifty-four persons was done

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by just five of them. The short selling of these five persons constituted 24 percent of all the short-selling done in the period studied.

Behold a single episode revealed by the report. October 5, as the market opened, U. S. Steel sold to the extent of 5,900 shares at 76. It declined slowly until, at 11 o'clock, 200 shares sold at 75⅛. It seemed ready to level off at 75. Specialists had on their books orders to buy 5,000 shares at 75. At 11 o'clock floor traders offered 3,500 shares, of which 2,700 were short. Under this assault U. S. Steel declined to 74½ and closed at 72. Next day The New York Times's headline read: "Stocks Drop to New Lows." Is it not about time to put a stop to this indefensible folly?

JOHN T. FLYNN

Time Steals a March

THE BOYS at the March of Time are pretty gleeful these days, for their release on Nazi Germany has kicked up more dust than anything in films for a long while, and Dorothy Thompson has come through with a column. The question of controversial subjects in the movies has been broken wide open, because the reel is controversial with a bang, yet quite the opposite of keeping people away, it has even topped the business done by the "Hindenburg" newsreel at the key Embassy theatre. As for out-of-town business, the report last week was that competitors of theatres on the Warner chain (from which Harry Warner has banned the film on rather questionable and certainly amusing grounds) are scrambling to book it themselves, which is spit in the Warner exhibitors' eye, and is relayed quickly back to the main office. Proving merely this: that if you do a job well, you can do about anything in films as elsewhere, and people will pay to see it.

However, the March of Time has had favoring winds for this venture. They do not book in Germany. The American Nazis are numerically a minor national group; no large interests are touched; a big and determined Jewish group is on the other hand benefited. And the Hays office with its stooge decency legions should not be opposed (at the time this went to press Will himself was still presumably in the woodwork and that end of Hollywood's horse known as Martin P. Quigley had not trumpeted the attack). A film like "The River" isn't so lucky.

In answer to those wooden-wits who have insisted on reviewing the film as an exposé, crying, Where is the hydra? Where are the hobgoblins? Where is the rotting flesh and do you mean to say that Nazis don't have tails? the editors have run in a little note saying that this is merely an objective pictorial record. This gets them off on the wrong foot, because the pictures could be duplicated almost exactly with shots of life in the USSR itself: the cutting and the commentary give them their direction. The film is really an editorial with pictures, an editorial for democracy and against suppression, militant nationalism and shoving people around. Balanced, fairly complete, decisive, it is a more likely statement of Germany today than many of the editorials we have seen printed, for that matter. (Where do you think the people who protest got their idea of a ground covered with dragons and an air full of darkness and New Masses cartoons anyway?)

The March of Time starts with travel posters and Berlin as the showcase of Germany today, good food, the normal pleasure throng, etc. You wouldn't guess from the surface that underneath are these facts: The population is squeezed to pay for it. The working man has got a job, yes, but the government says when, where, what and ten dollars a week (average). He eats, yes, but on something like war rations. He saves scraps. He accepts as minor prosperity what we would call being on relief—why? Here the film goes into the propaganda machine of Mr. Göbbels: pageantry, slogans over and over in the papers and on the air, every thought and action under rigid control. Make Germany self-sufficient (produce much, use little), mighty (the best work of the population going into munitions, military roads, tanks, ships, etc.) and nationally pure (down with Jews, swastikas over churches, endless steeping in the national legend). Get them early, and keep at them, primitive schools, compulsory military service, work camps, the frenzy and superb spectacle of mass meetings and parades. So they give and give and endure in a sort of glory—why? Because the machine is infinite and psychologically simple, and it kills off the inquiring intellect that we had thought separated men from oxen, even if heads must be lopped off along with it.

The camera covers all this; the editors have cleverly intercut shots of Hitler and the boys, and kept the scene shifting. Beatings, concentration camps, undercover opposition are not shown. These things are missed, but as frescoes on the main idea—like lynching in a democracy. Toward the end, the film jumps over to the United States for the activities of Fritz Kuhn's *Bund* and the resounding slap he got from the Southbury burghers. It underlines Ambassador Dodd's message on the threat to peace in Europe and goes back to the funny and terrible pomp of Duce-meets-Führer, and closes on a marching Germany, oiled, armored and belligerent ("democracy talks, fascism acts"), the Frankenstein's Thing of the Western world.

For a while I had a sneaking idea that it might be just as well not to encourage anything so rickety in social theory as Luce Enterprises to go in for open crusading, this being the kind of gun as likely to blow its breech out as produce a true salvo. But that is a consideration for the future, which already seems to be in the proper hands. For the present it is heartening to see good young blood making a field-day of the creaky superstitions of the movie trade. The best reassurance in the case of Time's "Inside Nazi Germany, 1938" grows out of the report that around the office in the feverish days before deadline, never had hard work (this was their first entire release on a single subject) seemed easier. Working under Louis de Rochement (a veteran film man) on the shots Julien Bryan brought back from Germany, the majority of this staff seems to have been working on something it believed in. And in making any good thing, belief tells in the end. Even if the heat were put on Luce Enterprises and the liberal element were tossed out, where could you gather replacements of talent who might throw punches with the same conviction for the side of darkness (look at The American Mercury)? The larger fuss of smaller talents often obscures the fact that, working quietly in the creative arts, some of our best people are radicals.

OTIS FERGUSON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Bandwagon

Loew's Happy New Year Shows! Celebrate New Year's Eve at Loew's! . . . Actual Pictures Panay Bombing and Sinking. – *From a theatrical advertisement in The New York Times.*

Another example of the Foreign Office flabbiness is in the Spanish affair. From the beginning I have argued that our proper game was to be strictly neutral and to supply both sides, with a natural bias toward the Nationalist forces. – *Mr. C. G. Grey, writing in The Aeroplane, London.*

"I certainly never wore a Fascist uniform or any other military trappings, but always ordinary civilian clothes, not even riding boots, etc., affected by other correspondents who have not yet accepted me socially for that reason." – *William P. Carney, New York Times correspondent with the Spanish Rebels, quoted in a speech by Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of The New York Times.*

"A married woman announcing she's going to marry a married man—it's un-American," Art said sadly. – *Mr. Art Jarrett, husband of Eleanor Holm, who has announced her engagement to Billy Rose, husband of Fannie Brice. Quoted in The New York Daily News.*

The Chicago Board of Censors today prohibited the showing of The March of Time newsreel, "Inside Nazi Germany, 1938."

Police Lieutenant Joseph Healy, acting board chairman, said board members voted to bar exhibition of the film in Chicago because they felt it was unfair.

"I expected that protests might result from a ban on the picture, so I called in an expert on that sort of film," Mr. Healy said. "I called in Lieutenant Make Mills of the bomb squad. He said he thought the showing of such a picture would have an ill effect." – *U.P. dispatch from Chicago published in The New York World-Telegram.*

Besides Being Beside Yourself

An orchestra played solemn music. A member of the Hitler Youth Organization chanted: "You are today and you are tomorrow. You are a thousand years before yourself. You are a thousand years after yourself, since blood was protected a thousand years before you came to be what you are." – *From a Berlin dispatch describing a "German Faith" baptism, published in The St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

Consumers: At Your Ease

Advertising must live up to its own claims. That is why you can have full confidence in goods consistently advertised. If the maker has a worthy product, fairly priced, he wants as many people as possible to know about it. If the product is unworthy, the printed word will only expose it sooner.– *From an unsigned advertisement published in The Jacksonville, Fla., Times-Union.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Mr. Young and Mr. Michele

SIR: If my article, "Fontamara Revisited," made any point at all, it is simply that living conditions under Italian Fascism are deplorable. In none of Mr. Stark Young's confused and confusing thinking, in the January 14 issue of The New Republic, could I find the glimmer of any evidence that this is not so. Instead, I found resentment against the article because, apparently, it succeeded in drawing a picture of Sicilian life that Mr. Young did not like but could not dispute. If he doesn't believe that Fascism degrades human dignity, let him stop heaving romantic sighs long enough to read Ignazio Silone's "Fontamara" or "Bread and Wine." . . .

New York City MARIO MICHELE

SIR: Mr. Stark Young's reactions to Mr. Michele's "Fontamara Revisited" suggest that Margaret Bourke White and Erskine Caldwell overlooked the importance of chivalry in their recent study of the Southern sharecroppers and I myself am chagrined that in researches among Midwestern farmers I allowed myself to be misled by their desperate preoccupation with the soil, which was being blown away, and with their animals that were dying of drought. Unquestionably I slighted their enormous zest for pioneering that should compensate them for almost anything. Likewise, in revisiting Germany I paid far too much attention to the complaints made (in whispers, of course) and not enough to the German Soul, especially in its Wagnerian manifestations and overtones. Mr. Borghese and Mr. Silone, although born, bred and suffering Italians, would do well to consider that poverty is negligible when watered with grace, and that ignorance if suffused with dignity is not wholly tragic. The moral seems to be that poverty is poverty and dignity is grace and all writers going to Spain, Germany, South America and points east and west should take cotton for their ears and study the art of the country in the last five centuries before writing their pieces.

Washington, D. C. JOSEPHINE HERBST

SIR: . . . . Mr. Young's . . . meaning is plain. . . . Poverty agrees with the Italian peasants, hunger gives their faces an expression of grandeur. By all means, don't give them three square meals a day, don't give them any physical comforts. In the first place they couldn't use them, and in the second it would simply raise hell with their standard of values. Nothing makes an Italian peasant happier than to be sure he is "living within the idea of a State," and not just any State, but a totalitarian State. All else, he knows, and Mr. Young would tell him again, is vanity, dangerous vanity. . . .

I have seen these villages, too, and I am afraid Mr. Young grows romantic with the years. That wasn't grandeur he saw in their faces; it was gauntness. And if gauntness, from lack of food, is what the Italians need to impress literary sightseers

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with their sense of tradition, then I'm inclined to believe they would prefer to be well fed and unimpressive. . . .
Niagara Falls, N. Y. ALBERT PEZZATI

SIR: . . . . I am sure it pained Mr. Michele to see what he saw in his native village and that it must have pained him even more to record it for publication. As I remember it, the article was not a ridicule or refutation of his race. On the contrary, in its sensitive description of this people's tragic misery lay an implied sympathy and solidarity with them in their unconscious struggle against those who have robbed them of their real character and tradition. What the Italians have lost in Brooklyn, Chicago and points west is what has also been lost by all groups that emigrated to America, including the Americans—the common heritage of mankind's essential dignity and significance blurred and denied by a social system worldwide in scope and structure. *Voilà l'ennemi!* . . .
Newark, N. J. HUGO GASPARI

SIR: Stark Young, in criticizing Ralph Bates in the issue of January 12, asks: "Where would we be if the Church had taken such an attitude (of destroying some art relics). Nine-tenths of the art preserved to us would have been thrown out long ago." Mr. Young should ask historians what the facts are. The Church did do just that. The list of destruction is too long to repeat here, but almost any scholar can tell him of many instances.
Ruby, Wash. C. E. PAYNE

Festina Lente

SIR: As to "Fontamara Revisited," Mr. Michele's meaning is plain. . . . Fascism has removed all the bathtubs and toilets from that village, abolished sewerage, established a convention of no linen no brides, cut off all the good water to increase blindness, killed the grass, made taxes limitless, trains late, etc.

I could begin like that. I should have to consider myself very silly or unfair if I did. But I should be perfectly justified in doing so from the above accounts of my piece. Very specifically, I omitted the question of Fascism from my remarks on Mr. Michele's article—I said "regardless of Fascist pros and cons."

Misinterpretation or misrepresentation appears in general either because the reader is stupid or too headlong, or because he is unfair. You may be unfair subconsciously through the will to fight for a cause, or you may be consciously unfair for the same purpose. For a time such backing may help further a cause, much as any sort of extreme partisanship may do. But meanwhile it must be true that sooner or later the inevitable bookkeeping will be made. In politics, in ideas, in social causes, as truly as in the wine Shakespeare was speaking of, every inordinate cup is unblessed and the ingredient is a Devil. In this way social human balances are maintained, no doubt.

The point I wanted to make in my article was that a writer may be vivid, concrete, his facts true, etc., and yet come far short of the whole truth. Mr. Michele referred his items and argument too much to the plainly recognizable, simple, popular American conception of civilization, mostly as external improvements, "freedom," etc. There must be many qualities in Fontamara people to be admired—I myself, I said, have seen this, have seen goodness, style, poise, even grandeur (which has nothing to do with fat or lean—I mean character). The whole sum, then, of my article was this: You may say nothing that is not true about a country and yet, for outsiders especially, be unfair to its soul.

As to this Sicilian picture I "did not like" but "could not dispute." *Ma che!* The first of my twelve visits to Sicily was thirty-three years ago, in 1904. At that time in certain districts there were people so poor they lived in caves and holes in the ground—ate grass, it was said. Many roads took only carts, many only pack animals; many journeys were at the risk of your life; the Mafia had thousands of members. In plenty of villages such as Mr. Michele describes—I need merely mention the excrement and filth near almost any wall of the town, even outside the churches, the stench of corners used as urinals, the beggars, the sketchy trains, etc. There must have been other things to be seen, however, or I should not have been there; but I refrain from sentimental implications. On my Italian boat from New Orleans to Palermo several hundred Italian steerage passengers, sleeping in sacking bunks, had twice daily handed them tin basins of some meat stew, or macaroni, plus chunks of bread. In groups of five or six they fed from one of these basins, often, the weather permitting, sitting on the deck floor. There were then no Italian laws to protect them. The steerage was what the boat made money on. And at that, the purser said to me, it was better than most of them had had at home.

The World War, everyone knows, left Sicily much worse off. But to take a village like Fontamara and its material conditions as a start for your indictment of Fascism is poor tactics. On this side even its enemies concede to it certain benefits. The astute approach would have been to take certain qualities in the race—for some of which I have been pleading—and argue their alteration or decay under the Fascist regime. This would be debated either way, according to the speaker, but at least would not be juvenile.

Meanwhile, Mr. Michele's article was far better than you might think from his and these other letters.

As to Miss Herbst's letter and her sharecropper-chivalry crack, I will say that Mr. Erskine Caldwell was never so ignorant as not to know that the idea of chivalry—not as a virtue necessarily but as a social inflection—has infringed, for good or bad, on the whole South, from top to bottom. And surely some of the most important German complaints should come from the German Soul. And dignity in itself is a form of knowing. Etc.

Mr. Gaspari is mistaken: the Italians' struggle against oppression is not "unconscious." And though we may say the change in foreigners after they come here is one kind of comment on America, to say that what the Italians have lost in America is what has been lost by all groups emigrating here, is bosh. To say so implies the same racial qualities, same century, background, reasons for coming, conditions met, etc.

To prevent other students in Ruby from molesting scholars, I may say that the easiest research on Mr. Payne's point about the Church and Art can be done in postcards, which along with survivals, frequently show substitutions, plastering over, or ruins. What I said was clear enough: not that the Church had always catalogued or preserved every work of art, but that it has never made a policy of sitting down periodically to sort good art from bad, one to be kept, the other dumped. If it had—!
New York City STARK YOUNG

Anti-Semitism in Miami

SIR: The readers of The New Republic should be informed, I believe, of the policy of anti-Jewish discrimination as practised by the Jewish hotel owners of Miami Beach, Florida. These owners cater almost exclusively to Jewish guests, even to kosher guests, but refuse to hire any or none more than a bare minimum of Jewish bellhops, bus-boys, waiters. The facts substantiating this situation are recorded in affidavits, testimony, by personal investigation. This policy of the hotel owners has been steadily extending, paralleling the growth of Miami Beach. With more hotels opened and opening, the competition is keener, and each hotel attempts to be more presentable than its competitors. Jewish boys with hotel experience, who have worked for Jewish employers in the North, have been refused on the grounds that the Jewish guests would object to a bellhop being called by the name of Ginsberg. The excuses of the hotel

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

owners and managers parallel the explanations of Gentile owners and managers up North. Jewish bellhops from the North have gone South for the season believing they would get jobs from Jewish managers in Miami.

Various Jewish agencies in Miami Beach have attempted to solve the problem without publicity, but with no success. The Jewish hotel owners and managers have ignored the intervention of the local rabbi, the threat of publicity from the editor of The Jewish Floridian, the intervention of a committee of local citizens and tourists, the call for arbitration from a committee representing the boys, and finally they refused to attend a conference called by the B'nai Brith. Thus they refuse to consider the question one of racial discrimination; they view it as one of economic advantage. . . .

New York City ROBERT GESSNER

Hosiery Workers and the Boycott

SIR: May I call to your attention the recent action of the executive board of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers in opposing the boycott of silk hosiery now strenuously advocated in some radical and peace circles. The board went on record unanimously as supporting the American Federation of Labor and Committee for Industrial Organization resolutions on the subject, to boycott Japanese manufactured goods but not Japanese raw materials manufactured in this country.

This stand was taken because the union felt that a boycott on Japanese silk as reflected in a boycott of silk hosiery would do much more harm to the American hosiery workers than it could possibly do good to the Chinese people in their fight against Japanese aggression. May I call to your attention the statement by the president of our union, Emil Rieve, in this regard:

"The Committee for Industrial Organization and the American Federation of Labor in resolutions passed by their conventions both took great care to exempt from a boycott of Japanese goods, raw materials such as silk.

"They did this knowing that a boycott of raw materials would affect quite a few American industries in which wages received by American workers will far outstrip the value of the raw material itself. The industries affected are silk throwing and preparation, manufacture of silk hosiery and silk cloth, and workers employed in cutting and sewing silk garments. . . .

"The average pair of silk stockings selling at 85 cents contains Japanese silk to the value of about 10 cents. The proportionate cost of silk in cheaper stockings is somewhat larger, but the value of the silk never greater, in other words—in order to do 10 cents' worth of harm to Japan we are hurting American industry about 75 cents' worth.

"But, it is claimed that hosiery workers can just as easily make full-fashioned hosiery from lisle or rayon. If this were true, there would not be any opposition to the boycott; unfortunately it is not. Lisle hosiery cannot be made on approximately 40 percent of the machinery in the industry. . . .

"The boycott will not only hurt hosiery workers, but will hurt the union which they have built and which will be admitted generally to be one of the progressive unions in the American labor movement. The boycott will create an oversupply of knitters and thereby weaken the organization. Thus, an indirect effect of the fight on Japanese militarism will be partially to destroy a progressive labor union. This is a union which has more than 60,000 members engaged in the manufacture of full-fashioned silk stockings, in addition to others who help prepare the silk for knitting. In all 100,000 American workers would be directly affected by the boycott of full-fashioned silk hosiery. . . ."

LAWRENCE ROGIN, Educational Director,
American Federation of Hosiery Workers, a CIO Affiliate.

New York City

[*Comment on this letter appears in the editorial section of this issue.* — THE EDITORS.]

From The New Republic Mail Bag

D. W. Brogan of Oxford, England, suggests a parallel between the attitude of Mr. Henry Ford toward his workers and that of Louis XVI toward the soldiers in his army and, "before he thinks of any such imitation of the Flight to Varennes as shutting down his plant, he might get someone to tell him what happened to the good-natured despot." . . . Harriet W. Patterson of Vergennes, Vermont, criticizes our editorial comment on the import of the Littlepage articles appearing in The Saturday Evening Post. In our January 12 issue we wrote that the existence of numerous and embittered dissident elements in the USSR "must throw doubt on the wisdom of recent policy." Miss Patterson counters with a reference to the Civil War in the United States and asks: "Was this due to lack of democracy or to unwise policies?"

Henry Apotheker, manager of the Trade Union Institute of the Rand School of Social Science, 7 East Fifteenth Street, New York City, sends us an interesting list of the courses in public speaking, current events, American labor in politics and labor economics that are being given for the special benefit of members of the American Labor Party. . . . The New York Chapter of the League of American Writers announces the third term of the Writers' School, which will include classes with Philip Stevenson, Mary Elting, Lillian Barnard Gilkes, Rolfe Humphries, Genevieve Taggard and others, beginning on February 7. The School's address is Room 516, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

Daniel Koerner of the Federal Arts Bill Committee, New York City, asks for support of the measure to establish and support a permanent Government Bureau of Fine Arts to establish works projects in the theatre, the dance, music, literature, the graphic and plastic arts, architecture and decoration.

Sherwood Eddy of New York City sends us an announcement of the plans for the two seminars he will lead during the year: the first from New York to Washington in April, and the second through most of the countries of Europe during July and August.

The Partisan Review, 22 East Seventeenth Street, New York City, announces a short-story contest for a prize of $100. Entries must be unpublished, typewritten and accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes, and the contest ends June 1.

What's on the Air?

Joseph P. Kennedy, chairman of the Maritime Commission and recently appointed United States Ambassador to Great Britain, speaks on Friday, February 4, 10:45 P.M., CBS.

Secretary of State Cordell Hull speaks on the World Trade Program, Sunday, February 6, 7 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

President Roosevelt talks on a program in honor of Boy Scout Week, Monday, February 7, 6:45 P.M., CBS, NBC-Red Network and Mutual Broadcasting System.

William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, talks on "Labor Relations," Friday, February 11, 10 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

Musical and dramatic programs of the week include the Metropolitan Opera Company's production of Richard Strauss's "Der Rosenkavalier," Saturday, February 5, 1:55 P.M., NBC-Blue Network; dramatization of "You Have Seen Their Faces," "Old Hell" and "The Leavenworth Case" by Modern Age Books, Saturday, February 5, 9 P.M., CBS; Rudolf Serkin, pianist, with the Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York, Sunday, February 6, 3 P.M., CBS; the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, Monday, February 7, 9 P.M., NBC-Blue Network; and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Thursday, February 10, 8:45 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

All times given are Eastern Standard Time.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

Reviewers on Parade: II

HERSCHEL BRICKELL writes a literary column for The New York Post and also, in 1937, he contributed to The Review of Reviews. Unlike some other critics, he did read "The Big Money"—as I said last week—but he read it with a mind completely closed. It mentioned drinking, vomiting, fornication, and therefore it offered a continual affront to Mr. Brickell's somewhat tender sensibilities. Though he stumbled bravely ahead from page to page, still he kept his eyes averted, and he managed to miss the point of almost everything that happened. But his two reviews are remarkable chiefly for their tone of supreme condescension. We learn from them that the novelist is boorish, bolshevistic, given to dabbling in experiments as childish and worthless as mud pies; whereas the critic—ah, the critic!—is polished, widely traveled, impossible to deceive, in short, a perfect man of the world.

Here are a few extracts from The Review of Reviews:

> Mr. Dos Passos continues the technique of his other fictional studies . . . and those who are interested in such experiments will probably be absorbed by the tricks. As for me, I am frankly no more impressed than if the publishers had announced that Mr. Dos Passos had written the book while standing on his head. . . . The body of the book is concerned with a number of characters—an aviator, an actress, a wife, and so on. They are supposed to represent the evil influences of capitalism, I believe. . . .

The body of the book is concerned with four characters: an aviator, a social worker, an actress and a public-relations counsel (just who were the "wife, and so on"?). They are not "supposed to represent the evil influences of capitalism"—Dos Passos has no such simple thesis—but some of them do represent the sort of people who led the scramble for the big money. Nowhere does Mr. Brickell say or seem to realize that "The Big Money" is not an unrelated fictional study but the end of a trilogy.

Here are some further comments from his column in The New York Post:

> A certain amount of vomiting is permissible in art, I suppose, but this constant throwingup, as Mr. Dos Passos would consolidate the two words, made me feel pretty much as I did once on a very rough Channel crossing from Dieppe to Newhaven, when a solid boatload of trippers of the bulldog breed remained violently seasick from shore to shore. . . . This somewhat personal comment upon the thesis of Mr. Dos Passos's novel is explained by the fact that I am sure he intended to write a serious book. . . . I happened to live in America most of the period covered by the book and I'll swear that the people I knew spent much less time drinking and vomiting than the people in Mr. Dos Passos's book. . . . There is, I ought to say, a great deal of frankness in the novel, and Mr. Dos Passos manages to get in most of the four-letter words. . . . I mention this because some people are impressed by such things. . . .

But not of course Mr. Brickell, who has crossed from Dieppe to Newhaven with trippers of the bulldog breed and who simply can't be taken in. . . . He had every right to dislike the book and to attack it in both The New York Post and The Review of Reviews. But before attacking it he should have taken the trouble to learn just what he was attacking. He should have described the book for his readers instead of giving them bright little extracts from his unwritten memoirs. And what achievement of his own—what book, what patient research into literary problems, what mastery of English prose, what single new idea—has given him the right to lecture Dos Passos like a schoolmarm talking from behind her desk to a naughty pupil?

Bernard DeVoto, in The Saturday Review, wrote the longest and one of the best reviews that the book received. He praised its scope, its speed, its mastery of detail, its "truly amazing fecundity of incident." Then, assuming the role of district attorney, he indicted the novelist for what is indeed his greatest fault, namely his failure to create many people whose individualities are strongly marked or who seem to feel strong emotion. But DeVoto insists, as he very often does, on carrying the indictment too far. If he had said that Dos Passos does not state emotion directly but tries to suggest it in terms of behavior, and that often the suggestion is lost on the reader, then he would have been strictly accurate. But by saying that "from page 1 of 'The 42nd Parallel' to page 561 of 'The Big Money' there is neither anger nor hate, neither loyalty nor admiration, neither affection nor fellowship, neither jealousy nor envy," DeVoto reduces his own case to nonsense. Has he really read from page 1 of "The 42nd Parallel" to page 561 of "The Big Money"? And, if so, does he remember what he read?

He says: "When Charley Anderson, getting drunk, passes himself off as Charles Edward Holden, the writer, he precipitates the first joke in more than a thousand pages of fiction. Irony Mr. Dos Passos has plentifully provided before . . . but this is the first bit of fun." Now it happens that there was a great deal of fun in "1919," especially in the story of Joe Williams and in the Italian adventures of the Grenadine Guards. Most readers saw it; Mr. DeVoto may have missed it because it wasn't his type of fun. But the first joke had been precipitated long before, on pages 49-53 of "The 42nd Parallel." It was the story of that goatish old rascal, Doc Bingham, and how he recited Shakespeare to Mrs. Kovach; and it was told in the best and breeziest tradition of the frontier humor that Mr. DeVoto has always admired. If he read the book, I don't see how he could have overlooked it.

Or take another of his sweeping assertions: "More life," he says, "resides in even the minor characters of a Lewis novel than ever gets between the covers of this trilogy. . . . J. Ward Moorehouse is the stylized statement of a conception—George F. Babbitt is a living man. Or, for an exact parallel, consult the Benda mask of E. R. Bingham in 'The Big Money' and reflect on the hideousness, but the living hideousness, of Dr. Almus Pickerbaugh." It is true that Babbitt was and is a living man—already he has outlived his author—but J. Ward Moorehouse was living too,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when he first appeared in "The 42nd Parallel." As for E. R. Bingham, it is true that he is hardly more than a mask in "The Big Money," but somewhere beneath the mask is the same Doc Bingham who used to drive through the country peddling religious tracts and filthy pictures—the same Doc Bingham who, in his long woolen underwear, was chased into the night by Mrs. Kovach's husband. Like J. Ward Moorehouse, he had shriveled into a caricature of himself when he bluffed and finagled his way into a fortune. That is one of the points Dos Passos is trying to make—or better, it is one of the lessons he has drawn from his own observation of people. Mr. DeVoto misses it, either because he never read or else because he has completely forgotten the beginning of the trilogy which he is now reviewing as a whole.

But Mr. DeVoto, too, is trying to make a point. It is the same point that he has made in a dozen other essays—that theories are dangerous, that novelists ought to record their experience without forcing it into a pattern, that critics ought to confine themselves to the evidence and are likely to go wrong as soon as they start making generalities. The trouble is that Mr. DeVoto violates his own principle by making more generalities—and often on shakier evidence—than any other American critic. He detects in Dos Passos' characters "the aroma of a syllogism" and suspects that the novelist "builds his structure out of logic rather than blood or breath"; therefore he attacks him in a logical, syllogistic schoolman's fashion. In practice, he does exactly what he accuses his adversaries of doing: that is, he mounts a pet theory and rides it to death without paying much attention to the road he is traveling. Like most of the prominent critics who reviewed Dos Passos, he is a much better writer than he is a reader.

MALCOLM COWLEY

The Unfinished War

Divided We Stand, by Walter Prescott Webb. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. 248 pages. $2.50.

MR. WEBB's book suffers from a certain dichotomy. He has two themes: the passing of the frontier and the submergence by capitalistic finance and incorporated industry of the democracy which it encouraged; and the disparity among several sections of the country in wealth and power. These themes do not always develop along parallel lines, but it is fair to say that a consideration of both emphasizes the possibility of disunion in our body politic.

That separatist tendencies have existed in the United States since the days when the Colonies won their independence is a matter of history. That the frontier was the cohesive force which held the country together, even through the period of sectional revolt, has been accepted ever since Professor Turner's discovery of its importance. Since its disappearance about 1890, Mr. Webb finds centrifugal forces on the increase. He sees the country divided into three sections: the North, composed of the states which won the Civil War, extending from the Atlantic seaboard to the Missouri; the South, which lost the war; and the West, which was the prize of the conflict. That the North, with 21.2 percent of the area and 57.6 percent of the population, dominates the other two areas to a dangerous extent by virtue of its possession of approximately 85 percent of its wealth, he considers a potential cause of disunion.

No one will quarrel with Mr. Webb's assertion that the North used its victory ruthlessly to degrade the South, economically and socially. "It not only turned the social structure over, but turned it upside down." The North was already in receipt of a lucrative bounty owing to the tariff on imports, a bounty increased from time to time during the domination of the Republican Party. In addition that party consolidated its power in the North by a pension system which in 1894 accounted for 47.4 percent of the ordinary revenues of the government. With these advantages the North forged ahead in its control of the industrial system, 180 of the 200 greatest non-banking corporations being at present centered there. In addition, 95 percent of life-insurance funds and four-fifths of the bank deposits are in Northern hands. The era of industrial feudalism, which succeeded that of a democracy resting upon the existence of the frontier, has been the result of the policies of the North, which passed the Fourteenth Amendment to protect the rights of the Negroes, and turned it into an instrument to safeguard finance by the decree of the Supreme Court declaring corporations persons. The final step is the subversion of the way of life natural to South and West by the penetration of Northern machinery, and the dislocation of local enterprise by chains of stores, filling stations, moving-picture houses, and the like.

Mr. Webb's analysis of conditions runs on sectional lines, but his remedies ignore them. He mentions without conviction the raising of tariff walls to permit the South and the West to collect an import duty on Northern commodities and thus subsidize their own industries. He must be aware that such walls, excluding the products of one state from import into another, already exist in the form of quarantine regulations, and furnish an example of the separatist tendencies within the republic. He suggests, as another way of holding the country together, a frank recogniton of the existing forces in the power of the great corporations: legalize the power and attach to it the responsibilities, social and economic, now fulfilled badly by local and national governments. That is the way of fascism, but if the federal government fails to maintain relief, which is at present the chief cohesive force in the commonwealth, we shall certainly see an increasing drift in that direction. A corporative state is one way of preserving our national union. Let the South and the West revolt against it, and the hordes of the North, shouting the battle cry of freedom, will overwhelm them with horrors to which Sherman's march will seem like a cakewalk.

A third method of overcoming the centrifugal tendencies is to recognize that the sectional divisions are today superficial, that the North is not a unit in its exploitation of the South and the West, but that the interests of workers in all three sections are opposed to the profit system on which financial domination depends. It may be argued that the enthusiasm and energy released by a nationwide crusade for a new order of social and economic justice are the best guarantees of our national unity.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

King Korn's Tassels

The Yearbook of Agriculture: 1937, edited by Gove Hambidge, E. N. Bressman and the Secretary's Committee on Genetics. Washington: Superintendent of Documents. 1,500 pages. $2.[1]

KING KORN[2] WALLACE was a bookish old soul, but a digger of dirt was he: he called for his seeds, he called for his pigs, and he called for his scribblers three—and lo and behold came the 1937 "Yearbook of Agriculture," fatter and heavier than her sister born a year ago. It completes a project undertaken by the Department of Agriculture—that of putting together a comprehensive and complete discussion of genetics and breeding in relation to plants and animals. Here we find all forms of plant and animal life not discussed in the previous volume. Besides nearly fifty separate articles by his department scientists, the 1937 Yearbook contains a digest of a world survey of what King Korn Wallace calls "superior germ plasm."

There is only one suggestion of scandal in the book: it is well known that King Korn and Honest Harold Ickes have their knives out to get each other over the matter of who is going to have the forests; now Ickes loves dahlias, and grows them in his gardens—here comes King Korn and shows that there are 7,000 varieties of dahlias. Is this a bribe? Possibly not, since he also shows there are 15,000 varieties of roses, 8,000 of tulips, some 7,000 of narcissi; and then delivers a lecture on how these varieties can be further combined to make flowers more beautiful and more fragrant.

But that is not all; he talks turkey, he follows the Department of Agriculture's psychological studies of the life, habits and manners of sheep and dogs. He says nuts! He shows thousands of ways to give people the razzberries—also blueberries, apples, pears, grapes and whatnot. King Korn also busts around and breaks some more illusions about the so-called "purebred" theory of genetics. He tells us to be bold in experimentation, and proves his point.

There is an extended summary in the book which gives the general reader a quick resumé of the work as a whole. He tells of certain varieties of tomatoes, cantaloupes, cabbages, table corns, potatoes, which by proper genetics will not shrivel, rot or cave in, as many worthy vegetable cousins are prone to do. The basic information on genetics is included in such a simple way that ordinary readers and even editors can understand it.

There is a chronology, including a family tree of genetics written by Robert Cook, editor of The Journal of Heredity. Mr. Cook begins with the date palm, and sails you up and down the Tigris-Euphrates in ancient Babylon. He travels around Assyria and digs into the Egypt of 5000 B. C., when man was already trying to use scientific genetics. He says, and I suppose it is true, that modern genetics has four main roots, namely Mathematics,

[1] Congressmen have a few of these available free for their constituents. Even the big-city ones. If you live in New York and voted for LaGuardia, write your congressman a complimentary letter but do not mention how you voted. Tell him how you would love to get the book.

[2] A name given our hero, now the Secretary, when as a precocious boy he won a prize on corn—I mean Iowa corn.

"The first really good biography of China's Chiang."—Time Magazine

Strong Man of China

THE STORY OF CHIANG KAI-SHEK

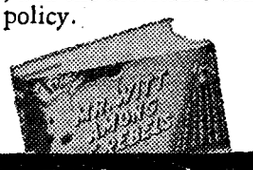
By ROBERT H. BERKOV

THIS, the first complete and impartial biography of China's mysterious Strong-Man, marshalls facts which few, even in China, know, and explains the paradoxes in Chinese politics, personalities, and policies, and tells the romantic story of Chiang Kai-shek's rise from poverty to dictatorship. Robert Berkov is Manager of the Shanghai Bureau of the United Press. Illustrated $3.00

Mr. Witt among the Rebels

By RAMON J. SENDER

RAMON SENDER, one of Spain's greatest writers, presents the problem of the reluctant revolutionist, against the background of the Spanish rebellion of 1873. The staid and fussy Mr. Witt, living snugly in a pure Victorian atmosphere, worrying over the obstinacy of Spanish bookbinders, is suddenly catapulted into the revolt. His beautiful and impulsive wife further complicates matters by supporting the rebels. This is a wittily ironic picture of a 'do-nothing' liberal, and the inevitable consequences of his policy. $2.50



By the author of "Counter-Attack in Spain"

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Plant Breeding, Animal Breeding and Cytology. It has a great deal to do with Mendelianism. Now at this point I shall have to fall out with King Korn Wallace, however it will pain his soul. There is no doubt that this work is monumental, and excellent—but the next job must be simpler and of more benefit to the average dirt-digger. He must get out a "Farmers' Handbook"—with everything in it about everyday living, such as home gardening, raising chickens, sheep and rabbits; how to make soap, remedies for stock. Then King Korn Wallace, instead of calling for his scribblers and his pigs, can lie back in his chair and call for his pipe, and call for his bowl and call for his fiddlers three—and be a happy old soul, for he will have done a swell job.

MAURY MAVERICK

Dark and Bloody Ground

Boundary Against Night, by Edmund Gilligan. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

EDMUND GILLIGAN is apparently a New England Irishman; he served as seaman during the War and has been a newspaperman since a delayed graduation from Harvard in 1926. All these factors (assuming that newspaper work included time on the police-headquarters beat and made him familiar with the life of the city in its hidden lower levels) play a part in the substance of his book. The main figure, Coventry, loses his eyesight on patrol-boat duty in the War; he readjusts himself in Boston and the shining countryside of Wayland, Massachusetts; he dies in the rioting of the Boston police strike. Hargedon the cop is actively more important to the story: a lusty blasphemous mick with the curse of liquor and a charging virility on him (the suggestion of a counterpart to Mrs. Bloom is emphasized in the soliloquy of his last delirium). He didn't go to war, not he; he was an old and deep one. But there was no escaping the miserable pay and treatment of his service; he started the talk of the police union and strike, and the riots led to his death too.

The rest are wives, mothers, lovers, slum people, floozies, policemen. All of them are affected either by the pinch of the times or by the return of the warped young men, hobbling home from the War. In the background there is a sensuous image of the streets and air of Boston, and a feeling not only of the Massachusetts landscape but of the Fathers behind it, under these pleasant skies the history of that dark and bloody and sometimes happy ground.

These are the ingredients of the book; but as a novel it breaks down into its ingredients too easily. The author seems to be traveling in several directions without any one destination; he writes with power but never arrives at a powerful total effect. As far as explicit moral purpose is concerned, I for one don't care if school keeps or not. If the Boston police strike is subordinated to the living, loving and death of one person, well and good. If the personal angle is lost in the larger pattern of a strike, still good. And if private friendships, braveries and passions are to serve only as vital footnotes to a social statement, whether passive (the black moody disillusionment of the young men as a class) or active (the despairing stand of the John Law union), that is well and good too.

But what happens here is that everything is subordinated to everything else—when you discount the element of author's coincidence, there is no more end than there is beginning. Even supposing the main point were the night closing in all around, a sort of Ecclesiastes pessimism, equanimity in wormwood, it is still no go, because of an indecision that mars unity and because of a constant tendency to dissolve all loose ends in an arbitrary solution of blood and gunfire.

This isn't anything so simple as a "mistaken" ideological approach, though. It is more likely the trouble a man has in trying to discipline many bitter deep convictions, the many shifting forms of his experience, a whole attitude toward life and how it may affect people—with his fine talents of expression he is trying to work all this into the novel form. And he has taken so many different things to work on that no one straight purpose is revealed to the reader.

The strength of the book lies in its characters, in whole passages of the tender, the pitiful, the obscene, in the large frenzy of the final riots. The writing achieves a certain atmosphere of despair and doom that persists even through pages of sunshine; it serves both for the delicately pastoral and for wide bawdy yarns along the way (particularly the one about Dobregan's father and the hollow tree). Some of the passages are superfluous and block the story, and the rhetorical device, at both opening and close, of Coventry's body riding mystically on the tides, is at least suspect; the book needs cutting. But in general it projects its images in full form on a large and living screen; as new writing it is important regardless of its imperfect success in this first book.

OTIS FERGUSON

The Sempiternal Babbitt

A History of the Business Man, by Miriam Beard. New York: The Macmillan Company. 785 pages. $5.

BROWSE through the pages of "A History of the Business Man" and you will be interested, amused and newly informed. Sit down with the book for serious study and, after a few hours, you will emerge slightly bewildered. The wealth of material is simply overwhelming; anecdote follows anecdote with machine-gun rapidity; familar names are recurrent and comforting, but a host of unfamiliar names bob up and disappear with disturbing frequency. One thing alone could have given this storehouse of rich material the clarity it needed—a unifying concept. Unfortunately that prime essential is lacking.

Every other ingredient necessary for making a first-rate book is here in good measure. The subject itself is of prime importance; the author's insights are keen, her style pungent; her reading covers an amazing range of material in several languages. As it is, she has written a good book, a useful book. With a unifying concept, she would have written a great book.

The task was not an easy one. There are superb studies of this or that phase of the business man's make-up—Sombart and Weber come quickly to mind—but no one before, to my knowledge, has attempted a complete portrait from the Homeric age to our own day. Not content with the materials of history alone, the author invaded the fields of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

literature and art and found additional color for the canvas. A truly remarkable performance.

Throughout the book there are illuminating associations with present-day customs. And frequently interesting sidelights on the business man's psychology are reflected in amusing anecdotes: "Merchant circles have ever had the tendency to achieve in fashion the distinction they cannot easily gain through titles, and so it was in the Middle Ages. When the merchant was forbidden to advertise his wares, he was all the more eager to show off his person, majestically draped in fur and golden chains. He was not always subtle in his choice of methods. The rich traders of Thuringia, who wore little bells on their girdles that tinkled at every step, can hardly escape the charge of being a little *loud* in their dress."

In ten excellent pages Miss Beard gives us the essence of Fascism in Italy and National Socialism in Germany. Other studies have been longer but none has been more competent. It is in these ten pages that the author presents convincing evidence of the grand job she could have done had her book been less a recital of semi-detached episodes and more a succession of events tied together into a definite pattern. Miss Beard's attempt to portray the business man through the ages would have been more successful if she had employed the cartoonist's technique of giving us the picture of the man in a few broad strokes. Unfortunately she has cluttered up her canvas with so much small detail that the significant outlines of the picture are not clear.

LEO HUBERMAN

Land of the Golden Fleece

Prometheus and the Bolsheviks, by John Lehmann. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 266 pages, illustrated. $3.75.

THE SUBJECT here is Soviet Transcaucasia, a fusion of one of the oldest of civilizations with one of the newest. The land of Jason's Golden Fleece and Prometheus the Firebringer, ancient battleground of races, feudal princelings and mountain clans, it has in fifteen years become an integral part of the USSR. John Lehmann went there to study the condition of the "arts under Socialism, the way people live and look in Socialist towns, and the Bolshevik solution to the problems of national minorities." His report is an informal, unpretentious record of conversations with poets, playwrights, soldiers, students and peasants, and of his observations in every section of the world beyond the Caucasus. Chapters from the history of the most interesting of Caucasian groups, the Georgians, serve as colorful and sharply contrasting background.

Although Mr. Lehmann is a partisan of the Soviets and does not gloss over flaws in the Soviet system, his book offers a startling glimpse of peoples which, after immemorial oppression from without and fratricidal war within, find themselves the peaceful, nearly autonomous parts of a powerful union, with their economic resources turned back to them, with every native culture encouraged, and with a future of unlimited promise. The abrogation of their right to criticize—which has evoked such condescending pity from Western democracies—they consider necessary, temporary and, compared to other advantages, trivial.

MILTON RUGOFF

CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

See More! Learn More! Meet Leaders in

9

European Capitals

1 of 8 Exciting STUDY-TOURS

IN EUROPE THIS SUMMER

Join this Privileged Group

Keep definite appointments (3-5 days in each city) with eminent leaders of party in power and the opposition in London — Paris — Rome Budapest — Belgrade Zagreb — Vienna Prague — Berlin (Russian cities optional)

The Bureau's 46th YEAR

The extra benefits and special privileges of Bureau-tours rest upon superior Leadership and Experience. Maximum values with comfort and economy. A non-profit foundation, every dollar adds to the enrichment of travel-satisfactions enjoyed by Bureau patrons.

Write for 1938 Table of 68 Vagabond, Vacation and Study Tours.

University Travel Summer School Course under the direction of Professor Alban D. Winspear, University of Wisconsin, writer lecturer, analyst.

A genuine extra-value in summer travel; good fun, good company always. Provides a fresh, authentic, face-to-face picture of titanic political changes at work in world affairs. Four tour-programs. Conferences with 30 eminent Europeans. Prices with 3rd class stateroom $695, Tourist class $788, taxes included.

One of 8 exciting Study Tours: Russian, Scandinavian & Harvard Near East Seminars, Classics, Child Art, Languages, etc. College credits if desired.

For Folders, Details Write to Box J-19

BUREAU OF UNIVERSITY TRAVEL

NEWTON MASSACHUSETTS

Society for Ethical Culture

2 West 64th Street, New York

SUNDAY MORNING AT 11—FEB. 6th

"MASARYK: THE BUILDER OF A NATION"

Dr. DAVID S. MUZZEY

Organ Music *Visitors Welcome*

Sunday Addresses broadcast over Station WQXR 1500 kc.

MASS MEETING

To support the C.I.O. drive for trade union rights in Hudson County

MECCA TEMPLE 133 West 55th Street

Fri., February 11th at 8 P. M.

Chairman: CARL RANDAU, President, Newspaper Guild

Speakers:

WM. P. CARNEY, C.I.O. Regional Director of New Jersey

MICHAEL QUILL, Nat'l. Pres. Transport Workers Union, N. Y. Councilman

AL BARKEN, T.W.O.C. Sub-Regional Director of New Jersey

ALAN HEYWOOD, C.I.O. Regional Director of New York

HARRY WENDRICH, Pres., Printers, Pressmen and Assistants Union

Tickets on Sale at all Workers Bookshops: 83c, 55c, 35c

(Proceeds to C.I.O. drive in New Jersey)

Sponsored and Arranged by

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

RED *4th Printing,* $3. RANDOM HOUSE

This book will tell you EVERYTHING you want

STAR OVER

to know about what's happening in CHINA

By EDGAR SNOW **CHINA**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Books: A Reader's List

PERSONS IN HIDING, by J. Edgar Hoover (Little, Brown, $2.50). The Chief of the Federal Bureau of Investigation cites the life histories of several famous public enemies to support his conviction that criminals are born and not made. The writing is geared to the simplest intelligence —which may be intentional—but the book would gain by more thorough proofreading and editing.

IN 1937, by A. C. Eurich and E. C. Wilson (Henry Holt, $2.50). The important world events of the past year recorded in a readable summary by the questionnaire-makers of Time Magazine, who make no judgments, offer no opinions, strike hardly any deeper than, say, the lead sentences of The New York Times.

ITALY AGAINST THE WORLD, by George Martelli (Harcourt, Brace, $3.75). Despite his Italian-sounding name, the author is a British journalist, a correspondent of The London Morning Post. He tells the sordid story of how Italy planned and carried out the conquest of Ethiopia, and sets it against the equally sordid background of international politics. A good job.

OVER THE NORTH POLE, by George Baidukov (Harcourt, Brace, $1.50). The story of a great adventure—the Soviet polar flight that "found the world of transportation a cylinder" and "left it a sphere"—as told by one of the three pilots. Baidukov writes as simply as a master mechanic to whom his job is all in the day's work, and still so vividly that the reader shares the adventure.

Contributors

McALISTER COLEMAN, a resident of Radburn, New Jersey, has written extensively on the industrial situation in that state and is at present active in the fight against Frank Hague.

JEROME DAVIS, president of the American Federation of Teachers, is the author, among other books, of "Capitalism and Its Culture," "The New Russia," "Contemporary Social Movements" and "Labor Speaks for Itself on Religion." His dismissal in 1936 from the faculty of Yale University became the topic of a nationwide controversy on academic freedom.

GUENTER REIMANN is a German economist now living in New York City and the author of a book, "Germany: World Empire or World Revolution?" published recently in England.

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS has been a newspaperman since 1903. "The Conning Tower," his daily column, was known throughout the English-speaking world.

MAURY MAVERICK, the progressive Representative from Texas, has contributed frequently to The New Republic and has written an autobiography, "A Maverick American."

LEO HUBERMAN is the author of "We, the People," "Man's Worldly Goods" and "The Labor Spy Racket." He is now at work on a history of the trade-union movement in the United States.

MILTON RUGOFF teaches English at Brooklyn College. He has reviewed for The Herald Tribune Books, The Nation and The New Republic.

"One of the best musical shows of the year . . . witty, fresh." —Atkinson, Times
"PINS AND NEEDLES"
New York's Hit Musical Revue
LABOR STAGE 39th Street and Sixth Avenue BRyant 9-1163
Evenings 8:40
Mat. Wed. & Sat. at 2:40
Prices:
Mat. 55c-$2.20
Eve. 55c-$2.75

THE THEATRE GUILD presents the
ALFRED LUNT & LYNN FONTANNE
production of JEAN GIRAUDOUX'S comedy
AMPHITRYON 38
Adapted by S. N. BEHRMAN
with a distinguished cast
SHUBERT 44th Street, West of Broadway. Evenings 8:40. Mats. Thurs. and Sat. 2:40. 300 seats at $1.10.
NO ONE ADMITTED DURING PROLOGUE

MESSRS. SHUBERT present
ED WYNN in HOORAY FOR WHAT!
"The critics' first genuine hoorays for a musical were reserved for 'Hooray for What!' the funniest show of the year." LIFE MAGAZINE.
THE NEW MUSICAL HIT with PAUL HAAKON
June CLYDE - Vivian VANCE
and JACK WHITING
WINTER GARDEN THEATRE, Broadway & 50th St.
Evgs. 8:30. Mats. Thurs. & Sat., $1-$2.50

Help Spain!
BUY A COPY OF
HEROES of the JAZZ AGE
NOW
in which the author speaks freely on vital things and of the heroes of this mad age. (Copies will be autographed upon request)
Order copy direct from author Jose Reyes Martin, 7,200 Ridge Blvd., Brooklyn, New York
Proceeds of all sales will be sent to the Loyalists in Spain. PRICE, $1.00

$300 $200 $100
IN PRIZES
for the best Papers of not more than 2000 words on the subject
"How Can Racial Minorities in the United States Be Harmonized?"
No Registration Fee! No Obligation!
For rules, enclose 3-cent stamp to
The New History Society
132 East 65th Street, New York City

MASTER PIECES OF MUSIC
Announcing an extraordinary sale of 100,000 Parlophone, Odeon, Decca discs. These marvelous European recordings comprise the cream of the world's finest music. A selection to gratify every taste. Sale price: 50c & 75c per record. Values, $1.50 & $2.00. Mail orders. Catalog.
GRAMOPHONE SHOP, Inc., 18 E. 48th St., N. Y. C.

PHILIP J. JAFFE, editor of Amerasia, speaks on "Can China Win?" Saturday afternoon, February 5th, 2:30 P. M., at the Workers School, 35 East 12th Street, 2nd floor. Admission, 25 cents.

FOR NEXT SUMMER'S TRAVELS, prepare NOW. Phonograph Record Courses, Linguaphone and other makes. 26 Languages. Request Booklet R. LANGUAGE SERVICE, 507 5th Avenue, N. Y. C. MU. H. 2-4221.

SPANISH LESSONS, conversational, business and literary, at your own home. Experienced teacher, Spanish born, university graduate. Price moderate, special rate for classes. Telephone for appointment, CHelsea 3-3117, between 5:30 and 6:30.

ARE YOU AN EAGLE in a world that is CUCKOO? CONTACTS connects you with hundreds of keen minds. Three-cent stamp brings detailed plan. Box 91, Station D, New York City.

SANITARIUM
THE ORTHMANN SANITARIUM
Washington Ave., Kingston, N. Y.
Phone: Kingston 3468
For Chronics and Invalids; Moderate Prices, Hydro-Therapy. References given.

TREE-RIPENED INDIAN RIVER
Oranges and Grapefruit
Direct from our grove to you
55 lb. Basket—$3.25
We pay express east of Mississippi
Satisfaction and safe arrival guaranteed
Write for price list and folder
T. R. INDIAN RIVER ORANGE CO.
Cocoa, Florida
Our 11th Year — Serving 9,000 Customers

COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE
SOUTHERN RESIDENT LABOR SCHOOL
Mena, Arkansas
CLAUDE WILLIAMS, Director
Courses include: Union Methods, Economics, Labor History, Journalism, Current Events, Public Speaking, etc.
Spring Term Opens April 11th
For information, write Donald G. Kobler, Sec.

INTERIOR DESIGNERS
MODERN INTERIORS FOR PROGRESSIVES, Offices, Apartments, Shops planned and executed on a budget. Featuring specially designed upholstered easy chair, $25.75. DESIGN-FOR-USE, 149 E. 34th St. Hours 12-2 and 5-6, or call VA 3-4658 for appointment.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED